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Editors

FREDA KIRCHWEY JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

MAX LERNER

Associate Editors

MARGARET MARSHALL MAXWELL S. STEWART

Editorial Associates

HEYWOOD BROUN ALVIN JOHNSON

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Publisher

FREDA KIRCHWEY

Hugo Van Arx, Business Manager. Walter F. Grueninger, Circulation Manager. Muriel C. Gray, Advertising Manager.

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The Shape of Things

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MEDIATION, MARTIAL LAW, AND DIRECT Presidential intervention have made their appearance in the steel strike since we last went to press. The first session of the board of mediators appointed by Secretary Perkins proved fruitless when Tom Girdler and Frank Purnell emerged from a seven-hour conference still refusing to consider a signed contract. Fortunately their plan to reopen Youngstown plants was scotched when Governor Davey imposed martial law to preserve the "status quo." Without question his action prevented a bloody riot, and President Roosevelt was wise in extending moral support by his request to the companies that they refrain from opening their plants. Governor Davey followed the example of Governor Earle of Pennsylvania, who had already declared martial law in Johnstown in order to prevent open warfare between "outraged" citizens and strikers from both steel mills and coal mines who are also outraged. Governor Davey's orders included the disarming of all persons not peace officers. This order would apply to both vigilantes and those union members who feel constrained to get out the family rabbit gun. So far, so good. But the state and federal governments should also enforce the systematic disarmament of the steel companies, whose caches of machine-guns and tear gas are a genuine menace to public peace.

*

THERE MUST ALSO BE GRAVE CONSIDERATION of what happens when fully armed police go berserk and use as moving targets women in their Sunday best and children with holiday ribbons in their hair. The description of the suppressed Paramount news film tallies all too well with the eyewitness account by Meyer Levin which we printed two weeks ago. The sadists dressed up as policemen whom that film reveals must go to jail; the film itself must be released to the general public. Tom Girdler and his cronies boast of "public support." We should be glad to let the American public decide whether Tom Girdler's precious "principle" which keeps him from signing a contract is worth the ten lives that were sacrified in Chicago on Memorial Day.

*

A FEW DAYS AGO THE SHIFTING CROSS currents of European politics found a focus in the announced visit of Von Neurath to England. A new crusade was under way to accomplish an old purpose—

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the alignment of Britain with Germany and the alienation of France from the Soviet Union. And a new method was obviously about to be employed: ingratiation was to be substituted for threat and bluff. The pre-Hitler polish of Von Neurath was to replace the Nazi-agent methods of Von Ribbentrop. The moment was opportune. Internal difficulties in France, the Soviet executions, and the obviously conciliatory temper of the new British government were three excellent cards in Hitler's hand. Now, as we go to press, the methods are suddenly reversed. The visit of Von Neurath has been canceled. "The situation created by repeated red Spanish attacks on German warships" requires his presence in Berlin. And to Von Ribbentrop is intrusted the job of bringing about "immediate, forceful action" by the chief non-intervention powers—Russia being omitted. The velvet glove is thus peeled off before it has suffered any wear; and a new international crisis is prepared in Berlin.

*

WHAT EVENTS BROUGHT ABOUT THIS change? Chief among them, undoubtedly, is the alleged torpedoing by Loyalist submarines of the German cruiser Leipzig—the "attacks" referred to in the statement above. The Valencia government has denied the charge in most vigorous terms, denouncing it as a "vile maneuver"; but whether it is true or not may prove of small moment. The Germans obviously intend to assert the incident and then blow it up into a full-fledged crisis. The German press, an exact gauge of official purpose, announced the attack in huge spread heads calling for immediate reprisals; Hitler rushed back to Berlin from a rest on the Rhine; the Von Neurath visit was canceled; and the demand for action was made. Undoubtedly the more radical Nazi elements, Hitler included, have been chafing for action ever since the Deutschland incident; the barbarous reprisal on Almeria was considered inadequate vengeance. If the submarine attack really occurred, it would probably be sufficient to outweigh all caution and moderation. If the attack is an official invention, it may serve to hide other reasons for aggression even less fit for publication. The final fall of Bilbao and the probable consolidation of Franco's hold on the rich region around it may well have inclined the Germans to a renewed interest and a more aggressive policy in Spain. In either case, an incident and a quick appeal to the non-intervention powers is expected to serve Hitler's purposes better than the more conciliatory methods represented by Von Neurath. Whether the tactic will succeed depends ultimately on Britain. The first reaction of the Foreign Office is annoyance. It is one thing to plan gentlemanly deals with the gentlemanly Von Neurath but quite another to find the arrangements canceled without warning and then be expected to help snatch Hitler's chestnuts out of the raging fires of Spain.

*

WITH THE FALL OF BILBAO THE SPANISH picture takes on sharper contours. Italy is openly claiming credit for the rebel victory, and is hailing it as the Italian triumph that wipes out the disgrace of the Guadalajara rout. The forces that finally battered down Bilbao's defenses were the forces of Germany and Italy—the hundreds of Heinkel and Junker bombing and pursuit planes that rained down death on the Basque soldiers and civilians and valiantly shot down the refugees streaming out of the city; the German artillery that shelled the city continually; the Italian infantry, conscripted for a war not theirs. Such was Franco's "triumph." He owes it, however, not alone to the ruthlessness of his fascist allies, but also to the so-called Non-Intervention Committee, which faithfully patrolled the coasts to keep out all aid for the Basques while it allowed hundreds of German planes and tens of thousands of Italian troops to stream in and bolster Franco's last desperate bid for power. Nothing in recent history can equal the travesty of international justice which the Non-Intervention Committee presents, or the sheer gall and brazen assurance with which the fascist dictators have alternately browbeaten and hoodwinked Anthony Eden. The Loyalists are by no means beaten. They have the man power, the resources, and the morale with which to win; they have built up an excellent army, and they have the mass of the population behind them. The real danger is continued foreign intervention, carried on under the cloak of the Non-Intervention Committee.

*

THE PAST RECORDS OF GERMAN DIPLOMATS make interesting reading; and they are instructive, too, as a gauge of Nazi methods and intentions abroad. A new German consul general, Baron Manfred von Killinger, has been appointed at San Francisco; he arrived in New York secretly last week nine days before he was expected, eluded the ship reporters, and is now safely ensconced in his new post. The Baron was a U-boat commander in the World War and later became a member of the reactionary Erhardt Marine Brigade and Erhardt's right-hand man. He was prominent in the equally notorious "Organization Consul," known as O. C., a secret league of former officers organized in protest against Germany's surrender at Versailles. It was members of this league who assassinated Matthias Erzberger in 1921 in revenge for his conciliatory attitude in the armistice and peace negotiations. Von Killinger was tried with a group of others for complicity in that fateful murder; but in spite of revelations of reactionary plots and terrorist activities in his organization he was acquitted for lack of evidence of the particular crimes charged against him. His path led logically into the National Socialist camp and he soon became leader of a Nazi outfit in Saxony, the Wiking Bund. Since the advent of Hitler, the Baron has followed a consistent course. As Nazi Commissar for Saxony he urged the formation of kidnapping bands working across the Czechoslovak border to wipe out, as the press put it, "Marxist, democratic, and Jewish plague spots in Bohemia." During Hitler's blood purge in 1934 von Killinger, then Premier of Saxony, landed in a concentration camp. Hitler released him, but in March, 1935, he discharged him from his office "with thanks for his

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services" during a phase of disaffection with the aristocrats. Hitler's gift to San Francisco is more than a mere Nazi agent and putschist, however. He is also an author. Among his contributions to world literature are two volumes with the engaging titles "The S. A. in Word and Picture" and "Serious and Cheerful Incidents in Putsch Life." The appointment of this man bears out the analysis of Nazi intentions in the United States made by E. B. Ashton in his article on Ambassador von Dieckhoff in *The Nation* for June 5.

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WE QUOTE HEREWITH AN EXCERPT FROM the extremely interesting report of the Committee on Jurisprudence and Law Reform of the American Bar Association, a report unanimously adopted by the association at its annual meeting.

> It seems to your committee that the most important subject for inquiry in this connection is the composition of the Supreme Court of the United States. The great extension of federal legislation to many subjects with which formerly it did not deal and the many questions of difficulty arising out of the war have thrown a heavy burden upon that court. This burden could be relieved in one of two ways:
>
> 1. The right of appeal to the Supreme Court could be materially limited.
>
> 2. Provision could be made for increasing the number of the justices of the court to eleven, besides the Chief Justice. Six justices as now would constitute a quorum (Judicial Code, p. 215). The concurrence of five should be necessary to render a decision.
>
> The latter method would enable the court to be in session almost continuously, and thus to dispose of a much greater amount of business without impairing uniformity of decision. . . .
>
> All of which is respectfully submitted.
>
> EVERETT P. WHEELER, CHAIRMAN, HENRY W. TAFT, THOMAS J. O'DONNELL, H. B. F. MACFARLAND, J. F. LOUGHBOROUGH, ROBERT P. SCHICK, RANDOLPH BARTON, JR., TORE TEIGEN , WILLIAM HUNTER, JOHN R. HARDIN

This report was made and adopted in 1921. It may therefore seem a bit dated to some of our readers; but we are sure it will seem fresh to that school of thought which holds that what was bad enough for John Marshall is too good for us.

✶

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN BY LOSING A BATTLE has won a campaign. His abandonment on June 1 of his National Defense Contribution (NDC) which had the unique fate of being bitterly opposed both by the moneyed interests in the City and by the Laborites, was one of the most gracefully executed retreats in British parliamentary history. The new NDC that now rises from the ashes of the old bears a stern visage for the British capitalists. Instead of being a tax on recent excess profits, aimed chiefly at the war industries, it is a 5 per cent tax for the next five years on all business profits over £2,000 a year. Added to the existing income tax of 25 per cent, it will mean virtually a 30 per cent tax rate—the steepest in British public finance since the last year of the World War. This is "Tory socialism" with a vengeance. But the British financial groups can scarcely complain. First, because in offering extreme unction to the earlier proposal they announced their readiness to bear "a simpler tax with a larger yield"—and Mr. Chamberlain has taken them at their word. Second, because Mr. Chamberlain's government is their government, his purposes their purposes, and the military force he is building up will be used to protect their interests and power. There is method in the fortitude with which the British ruling class bears its tax burden.

The Fall of Léon Blum

THE fall of the Blum government has rescued Blum himself from an intolerable position. What its effects will be, however, for the Popular Front, the fortunes of French labor, and the international situation far transcends M. Blum's own fate.

The logic of Blum's strategy in accepting defeat without a harder fight is not far to seek. He is surrendering power, at least temporarily, with the same adroitness with which he has carried it for over a year. Even the Senate obstructionists had evidently not expected the Cabinet's decision to dissolve. Blum's intent is clearly to place the onus for the fall of his Cabinet on the Senate reactionaries, stand by while a new government seeks to guide French destinies without trade-union support, and when it has floundered beyond its depth, to come back with increased prestige. It is a perilous strategy, but Blum's success during his year in power would have been impossible without such audacity.

Last March M. Blum asked his colleagues in the Popular Front for a breathing spell for the nation. He has now instead granted the breathing spell to himself. He found himself in a real impasse. He had survived the successive crises of the sitdown strikes, the Spanish war, the deflation of the franc, the Clichy massacre. He had passed valuable hours-and-wages legislation, helped the workers get collective-bargaining agreements. He had nationalized the munitions industries, relaxed the grip of finance capital upon the Bank of France, and almost succeeded in getting a new press law. He had purchased these reforms by a rigorous discipline over labor, an ineffective Spanish policy, and a tax program that bore heavily on the cost of living. Above all, he had incurred the deep hatred of France's "200 families" and the 314 old men in the Senate. The economic conflicts that lay behind this program and finally combined to force Blum's fall are described on another page of this issue in an article written before the crisis by Alexander Werth.

It was the steady campaign of the capitalists which led to the flow of capital out of France and depleted the country's once plentiful gold reserve. A treasury deficit of nine billion francs was in prospect for the current fiscal year, and even the indirect taxes to which Blum

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had finally consented would not have met the deficit. Blum had been placed in the position of having to shun on the one hand the orthodox capitalist remedy of removing restrictions on capital and thus attracting back the migrant capital. He had on the other hand been unable to force through a drastic Socialist program of commandeering capital by nationalizing the banks and controlling the processes of capital accumulation. He was compelled to steer a middle course which satisfied neither group. After finally getting the assent of the Communists and trade unions last week, he found the Senate obstruction too great; and without forcing the issue to a vote of confidence, he chose to dump the baby into the lap of the Radical Socialists. He met failure at the very point where every labor government must face its sharpest crisis—on the financial front, where at least the tolerant cooperation of the capitalists is needed unless the government is ready to take revolutionary action.

In a parallel way the new government is bound to meet its sharpest crisis on the labor front, when it seeks to cope with the problem of wages, prices, and labor organization, and when it needs the tolerant cooperation of the trade unions. At present writing the new government has not yet been formed, but the indications are that it will be Radical Socialist, with the aid of the center parties. Blum will probably do his best to keep labor in line and avoid demonstrations and strikes. But to maintain labor discipline within a Popular Front government is one thing; to maintain it while labor's enemies are in power is quite a different thing. Jouhaux, the head of the C. G. T., is on record as having said, "If the government is overthrown, the trade unions will not accept the verdict." The temper of the workers may be judged by the smashing defeat of the fascist Jacques Doriot in the parliamentary by-election the day before Blum fell. They are unlikely to stand by passively while the gains they have won with so much difficulty are being destroyed. Thus if the new government departs too drastically from Blum's policy, there may be serious trouble. If it stays close to Blum's policy, the Popular Front will get some of the fruits of power without the responsibilities of office. The dilemma is a serious one, and neither Chautemps nor anyone else attempting to form a government is to be envied.

Robinson on Relief

TODAY the millions on relief are doubly the disinherited. The rising productivity of labor and the increasing population will tend to keep constant the present total of 7,000,000 unemployed. But in the blazing light of recovery this mass of permanent unemployment has come to be regarded as merely a minor obstruction to a view of permanent prosperity. Hopkins, with his persistent and intelligent forecasts of the unemployment problem, has become Cassandra to an Administration pledged to raise the standard of living. President Roosevelt's glowing fireside talks about a better life for the "submerged third" are matched in Congress by an inadequate demand for $1,500,000,000 for relief; and even this modest request had been subjected to fierce attack in the Senate, while those enlightened individuals like Maury Maverick who would approach the relief and unemployment problem in terms suitable to its magnitude are voices crying in the wilderness.

The consideration of the relief bill happened to coincide with the stampede of the Solid Southern Senators off the Roosevelt reservation; and Senator Robinson, for once, was able to give full play to his genuine attitude toward relief, an attitude which is enlightening in connection with his aspirations to the Supreme Court. The most vicious as well as the most shortsighted line of opposition is the horse-and-buggy drive to reduce relief to a subsistence dole and push the whole problem back into the holes of local relief, where it is hoped it will be hidden from the national view and cease to be a drain on the federal purse. This was the motive of both Senators Byrnes and Robinson in advocating that local governmental entities be required to pay at least 25 per cent of the cost of all new WPA projects. "A time of prosperity," said Senator Robinson blandly, "is the time to put our house in order." And to his school order means cutting down relief arbitrarily when at least 7,000,000 persons are still unemployed, putting those on relief on the unproductive dole instead of setting them at wealth-creating work, and in general slashing purchasing power and preparing for a future disaster to the national credit that will make the present budget, deficit and all, look like the picture of health. Fortunately the Administration forces in the Senate, led by Barkley of Kentucky, were able to defeat both the Byrnes and Robinson amendments.

As it stands, the relief bill means drastic cuts. Harry Hopkins, when he testified before the Senate appropriations subcommittee, stated that $1,500,000,000 would cover relief needs on the assumption that the rolls were reduced by business recovery from 2,200,000 to 1,640,000 people during the next fiscal year. But with curious logic the people are to be dropped before the business recovery takes place; according to figures given out by Senator La Follette, 427,359 will be dropped by July 15—and no one pretends that they have other jobs to go to.

What these cuts will mean in terms of food and shelter in a period of rising prices can be imagined. They will also mean a definite cultural setback in so far as they curtail the arts projects which have been one of the most distinguished as well as one of the least expensive contributions of the New Deal. These projects have the right to survive. The least of their virtues is that they have enabled artists, writers, musicians, and actors to make a self-respecting living at their own trade. In the three years of their existence they have enriched the life of the American community to a degree not to be measured in dollars and cents. They have also made valuable contributions to the several arts. It was irony enough that these activities began only because the country was passing through its severest depression. It would be an even greater irony if this genuine cultural advance were to be slowed up *because prosperity has come back.*

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The Upper Bracketeers

HENRY MORGENTHAU, Roswell Magill, Elmer Irey, Herman Oliphant, and their associates in the Treasury are now engaged in an anatomy lesson before the joint Congressional committee on taxation. They are revealing in their testimony the complete structure of tax evasion. They are offering a surgical dissection of the capitalist mind at its moment of greatest tension—the moment when taxes have to be paid.

David Lawrence has charged the President with demagoguery and a desire to foment class hatred in his campaign against the big tax evaders. Much of the resentment against the President in the upper tax brackets proceeds from a belief that he has become "a traitor to his class." For how could treason be more crucially displayed than by violating one of the sacred unspoken (except by Mr. Morgan) rules of the capitalists—that where the government is concerned, it is cricket to get away with what you can? Whether Mr. Roosevelt is that sort of traitor we leave for a court of honor of his own class to determine. But as for the charge of political shenanigans, we see nothing in it. The simple fact is that receipts from income taxes have fallen far short of the Treasury estimates made in the January budget. This is not the fault of the estimates: anyone who knows the Treasury mind knows that above all else it fears to be caught in an over-optimistic estimate. It is rather the fault of the last campaign. The campaign struggles generated among the upper bracketeers a hatred of the national government unparalleled since the Southerners' hatred for Lincoln. What more natural than that a Big Enterpriser, frustrated by Roosevelt's sweep, should have sought revenge by an uncommonly avid collaboration with his equally resentful tax lawyer?

Mr. Roosevelt and Secretary Morgenthau in their statements cover much the same ground. They list the eight most popular devices for tax dodgers: the foreign personal holding corporation (the "Bahama corporation"), the domestic ditto, the Bahama insurance company, the incorporated yacht or country estate, the fake write-off of interests and losses, the multiple trust for relatives, the intra-family partnership, and the pension trust. For tax lawyers and government experts these are a twice-told tale. But for the common man the list will furnish a revealing insight into the way his betters utilize the law to enjoy the fruits and avoid the responsibilities of government expenditures. In Mr. Roosevelt's phrase, here is "civilization at a discount."

No one has yet disputed the facts of the indictment. Its truth is underlined by the haste with which many of the millionaires under scrutiny, caught red-handed, are offering to pay up the taxes they sought to dodge, plus interest charges, in order to escape the publicity which the Congressional committee insures them. Three questions of enduring interest, however, remain.

One has to do with the distinction currently made between tax evasion and tax avoidance. Evasion, it would seem, is the use of the devices enumerated above with fraudulent intent. Avoidance, we are told, is merely a hard-headed Yankee insistence upon paying the government as little as is legally possible. To our mind the debate over this distinction is an empty one. From a legal view, as Justice Holmes pointed out, the only question is whether you have kept on the safe side of the law or been caught on the unsafe side—and that depends on who the judges are that ultimately make the decision. From an ethical standpoint, there would seem to be little to choose between fraud and guile in the upper brackets. A cynic might say that fraud is when you are caught and guile is when you are not. Our own statement would be that there are clear cases of fraud and clear cases where the taxpayer has stayed within the spirit of the law; but that the Treasury's concern is with the cases where the tax dodger has deliberately used the letter of the law to make a mockery of its spirit.

The second question is more serious. Secretary Morgenthau referred, in his statement to the committee, to the unequal contest that the Treasury was waging, pitting the 2,800 field agents of the Internal Revenue Bureau against 45,000 tax attorneys and accountants. What is involved here is not only the tried ingenuity of the American tax lawyer in getting around the law. More tragic for democratic government in a business economy is the fact that even if the Treasury succeeds in plugging the law's loopholes it is necessarily waging a losing fight. Suppose that the joint committee recommends funds for hiring more revenue agents: the Treasury will find that it is only turning out more experts that the upper bracketeers will be able to use in the tax dodging of the future. For the Treasury is a sort of training school in tax manipulation. As soon as a young official learns the ropes under the government, he is caught up by business men who can afford to pay him handsomely for his knowledge.

The final question concerns the place which the campaign for tightening up on tax collection will have in the total tax program of the Roosevelt Administration. It is significant that the Administration has had "tax trouble" ever since it came in. In 1933 there was the Pecora investigation of the Morgan income-tax payments, which showed an intimate tie-up between the Morgan firm and many high Administration officials who were on the Morgan "free list." In the spring of 1935 there was the Mellon tax case. In the summer of 1935 the surtax rates on incomes in excess of a million were stepped up, after stormy Senate hearings, but the Administration inheritance-tax proposal was defeated. In 1936 there was the turmoil over the corporate-surplus tax. In 1937 we have already had the government tax prosecutions of du Pont and Raskob. And now the campaign against the army of tax dodgers. Many will interpret this record as proof that the Administration is out to soak the rich. To us it is rather the record of a government that is trying, as no previous government has tried, to distribute the incidence of taxation with some concern for the capacity to bear it. But we find also that it is acting in the face of immense odds, stubbornly and bitterly opposed at every turn, and without the benefit of a clearly articulated philosophy of taxation.

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Garner Turns on F. D. R.

BY THOMAS L. STOKES

Washington, June 20

YOU can get all sorts of reasons around here why Vice-President John Nance Garner, just when things were getting hot in Congress for his "boss," as he calls the man in the White House, bundled himself and his wife into their long official limousine and started across country to that far-distant border metropolis known as Uvalde.

It is one of those mysteries that Washington loves. It is the sort that Mr. Garner himself loves. People say, among other things, that the Vice-President left in a huff, that he was thoroughly displeased with the course into which President Roosevelt was steering the New Deal—though this course, aside from the Supreme Court plan, had been charted publicly long ago. This is all true as to the Garner temper and mind. To those who have watched "Jack" Garner operate, under cover and openly, for many years, the logical explanation is that the Vice-President knew when he left—even though he had announced such a visit weeks ago—that stories immediately would appear that he was sore about the way the President was running the government. The stories were written. Futile was his own belated denial that anything was wrong between him and the President. He had done the trick, one of the neatest seen about here in a long time.

He selected the proper psychological moment. Feeling was bitter over the Roosevelt court-reform plan. Senators and House members were getting weary of going around in a circle—as they were being forced to do because the President held back his legislative program behind the court bill. When he began to feed them his program, starting with the involved and complicated—for the Congressional mind—wages-and-hours bill, they saw mountains of worry piled up before them for months ahead. Suddenly they forgot the overwhelming mandate of last November, became fatigued of well-doing, and were ready for the siren voices of those who would adjourn Congress and let them go home, on the old excuse that they would come back next year "refreshed" for further reforms.

Jack Garner's departure crystallized a lot of ill feeling which he, in his furtive way, had helped to nurture from the anonymity of the Vice-Presidency. The long smoldering revolt broke into the open. Others were encouraged to grumble. The inevitable warfare between old-school conservatism in the Democratic Party, largely lodged in the South, and the New Deal was exhibited to the public gaze.

Things began to happen which of themselves served to throw light on past events. The Vice-President's automobile had not been long gone from the pavements of Washington before his "front man" and agent in the Senate, "Jimmy" Byrnes of South Carolina, opened his fight against the Roosevelt relief program with the proposal to make the states and localities pay 40 per cent of the cost of work-relief projects. This coincided with other adverse developments for the Administration. The Judiciary Committee majority, including seven Democrats, came forward with their report damning the Roosevelt court-reform bill in language skilfully embroidered by the master-hand of Senator Borah of Idaho. The President resented the strong personal rebuke. His friends passed the word to the committee minority to issue a report defending him. But none heeded. Senator Ashurst of Arizona, committee chairman and supposed champion of the measure—though actually nothing of the kind—finally broke a mysterious silence to telephone reporters and ask facetiously: "Whatever became of the President's court-reorganization bill?" Its death was being plotted deep in the night in a series of quiet and intimate little dinners sponsored by the wealthy Democratic Senator Gerry of Rhode Island, to which were invited conservative anti-court-reform Democrats and also Republicans—even including John D. M. Hamilton, now virtually useless as far as the Republican Party is concerned.

Again there were reports that the court plan was to be shelved. The seriousness of the Congressional dilemma became manifest when the President at a press conference struck right and left, and sought to appeal to the public over the head of Congress with a restatement of his objectives for the common masses. The next day the White House announced that great jamboree—or "love feast" as it was cynically called—on Jefferson Island, where the President in three days of good fellowship could meet and talk with all Democrats in Congress who were willing to go to the retreat in Chesapeake Bay.

Then, alas, faithful Joe Robinson, who had earned the title "good soldier" by staunchly supporting measures which, in the bottom of his rough conservative heart, he did not approve, deserted the ship and joined Byrnes in the plan to have localities pay part of the relief bill—25 per cent Joe suggested. Jimmy acquiesced in the reduction. Jack must have chuckled to himself in far-distant Texas.

The Garner cabal was bearing its fruits. That such a cabal long has existed is no secret in Washington. Its headquarters are off the Senate lobby, where of an afternoon the Vice-President and his cronies gather to swap yarns, pointed up with sly legislative suggestions. Jimmy Byrnes is most often there.

Its first open skirmish came earlier this session when Jimmy suddenly rose during consideration of the Guffey

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coal bill and offered an amendment condemning sitdown strikes. This was intended to embarrass the labor allies of the President. The Vice-President was behind it. Basic in the open rift now developing is the Administration's friendship for labor. The reason can be found in the "Congressional Directory" biographies of Southern leaders, which show that most of them were born and reared and now live in small towns where the issue is seldom allowed to appear. It's the old conflict between the bourbon Democracy of the agrarian South and the mass democracy of the big industrial cities North and East. That they have worked side by side under the New Deal thus far is a miracle. The test of strength is fast approaching. It may come on the question of whether Congress remains here to enact the Roosevelt program this session.

As he ponders his legislative problems President Roosevelt often must think of the cost of the block of votes which Jack Garner threw into his pot at Chicago in 1932 to clinch his nomination.

Behind the French Crisis

BY ALEXANDER WERTH

Paris, June 9

THE Deutschland incident was a serious blow to the equanimity of Paris, where it was thought that everything would be nice and quiet for at least a few months—both internally and externally. The Exhibition opened two weeks ago, and even those who had treated it as "a national humiliation" realized that, in spite of delays and countless difficulties, there *was* an exhibition after all, and even a very fine one; that there was already enough for visitors to see to fill up two or three days; and that in two or three weeks' time everything would be practically finished. In the last weeks crowds of foreign tourists have been coming to Paris; many of the hotels are completely booked till October; and it began to look as though the great illusion of European peace and prosperity and of that international solidarity which, as we are told every day, the great Paris Exhibition symbolizes could be successfully maintained for five or six months. Spain, no doubt, was a nuisance, the petit bourgeois thought to himself, but, after all, Spain was stewing in its own juice, and nobody seemed to be either winning or losing, and it was said that Germany and Italy were becoming tired of the whole show and that with luck it might fizzle out somehow without bringing on any new complications. There was also a widespread conviction that Germany and Italy were in great economic difficulties, that they could not fight a war, that they were frightened of British rearmament—the greatest new peace factor in Europe—and that, in short, 1937 might pass without any major explosion. The next few weeks will show whether this relative optimism was justified, and whether the new developments in Spain will not destroy it.

The Blum government has now been in office for a year. I need not describe all that it has done in the way of social reforms; as everybody knows, it did more during its first eight months in office than any other French government before it. Its principal reforms were collective contracts, holidays with pay, the forty-hour week —reforms which were accompanied by a tremendous growth of the French trade-union movement—the Office du Blé, the reform of the Bank of France, the nationalization of war industries, and compulsory arbitration. There has been a large increase in wages; there has been devaluation, and also a great rise in prices and costs of production. This increase in prices and costs is the weak spot in the armor of Blum's New Deal; it continues to have an adverse effect on France's export trade and on her public finances, and may ultimately precipitate another big financial crisis. This may in any case be difficult to avoid if, as seems probable, France is obliged to borrow in 1938 another 35 or 40 billion francs. After five years of intensive borrowing, her borrowing capacity is naturally much weaker than that of England and the United States. And yet borrow she must if she is to keep her armaments at a safety level.

In a speech the other day Blum admitted that it was "almost paradoxical" for France, already overburdened with military expenditure, to enter upon a vast program of social and labor reform. Yet that is what has been happening in France in the last year. Already in February it became clear that the two could not continue at the pace that had been set if the currency was not to be wrecked; and since military expenditure could not be cut, some of the social expenditure, particularly public works, had to go overboard. Hence the "pause." The problem could have been solved by autarchist or semi-autarchist methods—to which several trade-union leaders, who placed great store on public works, were distinctly favorable—but it would have meant the end of the policy of economic and financial "liberalism" embodied in the Three-Power Declaration of September 25, and it would have shaken France's financial and political relations with the United States, and especially with England. And England gave Blum a serious warning against solving his difficulties by resorting to exchange control.

The decisions taken on March 6, with their concessions to the banks—including a curtailment of the public deficit by 6 billion francs, from 32 to 26 billions—in return for which they agreed to make the 10½-billion defense loan a success, were the most important episode

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since devaluation in the evolution of Blum's "New Deal." The "financial liberalism" dear to the heart of London was saved, and Blum imagined that even if his concessions to orthodox finance were a retreat they were not a surrender; and he claimed that the "pause" was not in contradiction with the program of the Front Populaire.

He was horrified to find that the working class was taking his retreat with very bad grace. The hostile reaction of the more extreme elements of the working class was symbolized in the Clichy riots, which broke out ten days after Blum's "surrender," on the very day of the startling success of his National Defense loan. For two months the relations between the government and the working class remained very strained; and toward the end of April the C. G. T. leaders, startled by the violent temper of their rank and file and afraid of losing their grip on them, broke almost into open rebellion against the government. Léon Jouhaux made a number of angry speeches in which he summoned the government to provide 10 billion francs for public works and declared that in the revolution which was in progress in France the working class was not yet playing the important part in the management of the affairs of the state to which it felt entitled. It seemed as if the C. G. T., with its five million members, was claiming the role of a super-government which could dictate its will to the democratic government of the republic. People in Blum's immediate entourage felt very bitter about it, and complained that the Blum government had done more for the working class than any other government had done—"and now look at the way they treat it."

Blum rejected the more extravagant demands made by the C. G. T.—particularly the 10-billion-franc loan, which he said was financially out of the question; and it seems that the C. G. T. leaders realized that they had gone too far in their pressure on the government. The Radicals were becoming restless, and M. Campinchi, their leader, angrily declared that if France abolished the "sacred rights" of capital, it did not mean that she would put up with the "sacred rights" of labor; and that the claim made by certain trade unionists that the C. G. T. be given a labor-market monopoly was intolerable in a free country. "The idea that only a person holding a C. G. T. membership card may get a job is fascism of the worst sort," he said. Jouhaux hastened to reply that the C. G. T. had never really asked for such a monopoly, but that it was necessary to control the enlistment and dismissal of labor in view of the grossly unfair and illegal discrimination against union labor of which only too many employers were guilty. This was true in a sense; and Blum promised to set up an impartial organism which would control enlistments and dismissals, in order to check abuses coming from both sides.

The C. G. T., surprised by so sharp a rebuff not only from the government but also from the Radicals and the greater part of French opinion, lowered its pitch, and since then Jouhaux, together with Blum, has been preaching moderation to the rank and file. On May 28 he said that the working class, in gaining new rights, must also be aware of its greater responsibilities toward the state.

It looks as though the danger of major labor disputes had been averted for some time. Although the cost of living has gone up steadily since last year, prices have tended to become stabilized, and thanks to successive wage increases and the various labor reforms, the working class is in the main still better off than it was a year ago. The automatic extension by six months of the collective contracts which expire in the near future—an extension for which a bill has been tabled at the Chamber—should also help to ward off trouble during the "Exhibition truce." What is more, the working class cannot deny that in spite of the "pause" the application of the Front Populaire reforms already passed is progressing: thus the application of the forty-hour week has been extended to almost every trade, and the nationalization of the war industries has been extended in the last month to the Schneider and Hotchkiss works, two of the most important armament firms in France.

Even so, there are a few trades which are thoroughly discontented, and chief among them is the building trade. The building trade is hard hit, and since the men at the Exhibition feared that once it was finished they would be out of work, political agitation, ca'canny, and other difficulties—including some serious outbreaks against the use of non-union labor—were inevitable. The curtailment of the public-works program on March 6—a program which the Exhibition workers thought was to guarantee them new work when the Exhibition was finished—was largely at the root of the trouble, and has tended to turn the Exhibition into the playground for all forms of labor extremism. Only a few days ago the building unions again uttered a threat to occupy the Exhibition if they were not guaranteed reemployment within two months. The Exhibition workers have been assured that everything will be done that is "humanly possible" to find them work, but from their point of view that is not quite sufficient.

This is one of the big problems with which the Blum government is faced. Another, even greater, problem, to which Blum referred on May 28, is the fall in output. "Trade unionism," he said, "must not be the synonym of underproduction and laziness." For a large number of reasons production in France is tending more and more to lag behind consumption; with the result that prices may again increase, and that the adverse trade balance may grow. The Blum government is asking for plenary power in tariff matters. Much will depend on how it will use these powers if it gets them. Will it lower tariffs in some cases to send down home prices? Will it in other cases raise them so as to protect home wages and reduce the adverse trade balance, even at the cost of increasing internal prices? In any case, the problem of output per hour, and of output in general, is the biggest one with which the Blum government is faced at home. Will it solve this problem? The answer to this will also be an answer to the all-important question whether the forty-hour week can in the long run be a success.

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C. I. O.: Far Western Front

BY RICHARD L. NEUBERGER

Portland, Oregon, June 11

DELEGATES representing 120,000 workers in the fir and cedar and pine forests of the Northwest listened intently. Abe Muir, international vice-president of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, was making the American Federation of Labor's last desperate attempt to prevent the secession of the largest union west of the Mississippi River. William L. (Big Bill) Hutcheson, the carpenters' international president, was 350 miles away in the logging town of Omak; he had not accepted a challenge to come and defend his organization but had sent his lieutenant instead.

Muir's voice nearly broke as he reached his peroration: "I warn you that you are being misled and duped by Communists and Communist sympathizers." The silence of his listeners was shattered. "Show us! Show us!" they shouted. Someone cried, "Prove it!" Harold James Pritchett, wiry thirty-three-year-old president of the Federation of Woodworkers, was on his feet. "Any man is pretty badly off when he gets around to using the red scare and the Communist bogy," he said, "and a labor leader is ten times worse off."

A few minutes later a lopsided vote ordered a referendum among the federation's 120,000 members on the question of affiliating with the Committee for Industrial Organization. Pritchett declared he would stake his position on 75 or 80 per cent of his membership favoring the C. I. O.

The director of the C. I. O., John Brophy, left Portland jubilantly after the woodworkers had decided to hold a referendum. It is virtually taken for granted among the adherents of both the C. I. O. and the A. F. of L. that the loggers and the sawmill and timber workers will follow John L. Lewis. Since the days of the "wobblies" they have headed the progressive and radical labor forces in the Northwest. The Woodworkers' Federation itself was formed last year to place lumber strictly on an industrial-union basis. It includes men who fell firs in the high Cascades and men who carve furniture in workshops and factories.

The secession of the woodworkers will leave the A. F. of L. in the Far West greatly depleted in financial resources and political strength. What cotton is to the South and automobiles are to Michigan, lumber is to Washington, Idaho, Oregon, and northern California. Three years ago Harold Pritchett and his five children were existing on a federal relief allotment of $47 a month in British Columbia. Today he leads more men than any other labor official west of the Mississippi, and by the end of the year he expects the Woodworkers' Federation to have at least 200,000 members. He thinks the woodworkers have a potential membership of more than 1,000,000. In dozens of mills and camps Pritchett has challenged Bill Hutcheson to meet him in open debate and explain why these men should stay in the A. F. of L. Hutcheson never shows up.

The A. F. of L. meanwhile faces another big defection on the Pacific coast. The Maritime Federation of the Pacific in convention here this week unanimously recommended that its 40,000 members vote to join the C. I. O., and a referendum was ordered on the issue. Harry Bridges announced that a rank-and-file vote on the C. I. O. issue would be held immediately among the 22,000 longshoremen under his leadership. The result of this referendum is practically a foregone conclusion. The 6,800 members of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific already have gone on record in favor of bolting the A. F. of L.

Closely connected with these developments is the report that Bridges will be made C. I. O. director in the Far West. When Brophy was here, it was Bridges who acted as his guide and adviser. This seems to indicate that Lewis is determined to overlook possible red-baiting and other liabilities for the sake of aggressive and militant leadership. Bridges is portrayed in numerous newspapers as an *agent provocateur* of revolution—and an alien one at that. The attacks upon him were accelerated a few weeks ago after he spoke at the University of Washington and prophesied the ultimate end of the employing class. "The employer and the employees," he said, "have nothing in common." The sharpness of the conflict in the West was symbolized in the reaction to Bridges's speech by the one A. F. of L. leader who may be able to hold the wavering line of craft unionism along the Pacific Coast. Dave Beck, shrewd and pudgy vice-president of the Brotherhood of Teamsters, termed it "plain communism," and then went on to appeal to the business men and industrialists for assistance in combating the C. I. O. Some of the finest individuals in the world, Beck declared, were employers. He also indulged in fulsome praise of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce. "There is nothing but the finest working relationship between us," he asserted. "I want to work with them, and the people I represent want to work with them."

With the exception of Beck, the Western leaders of the A. F. of L. have scarcely put up even perfunctory opposition to the march of important key unions into the C. I. O. Beck, however, has already demonstrated the technique by which he will seek to stop the advance of industrial unionism. He speaks before innumerable groups, such as the American Legion and the Rotary clubs, talks more conservatively than the representatives of the Law and Order League, and the open-shop Seattle *Business Chronicle* frankly refers to him as an "exploiting capitalist." Back of Beck's verbal barrage

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is the famous "beef squad" which has made him the boss of Seattle for the past two years. In May the rank and file of the newsboys' union in Seattle revolted and showed alarming C. I. O. tendencies. The brutal beatings which they suffered at the hands of Beck's bruisers were described by Justice James T. Ronald of the Superior Court as "so shameless and disgraceful as to parallel the lawlessness witnessed at times in certain saloons in pioneer days." The warehousemen's division of the longshoremen would have won a department-store strike in Portland this month had Beck and his "beef squad" not ordered the teamsters to walk through the picket line. Rank-and-file teamsters who rebelled at the command were summarily set right on the situation. When teamsters in Oakland refused to march past longshoremen pickets at a warehouse, Beck hurried south and suspended their charter. In both Seattle and Portland teamster-controlled Central Labor Councils threw out the warehouse workers affiliated with the longshoremen. All along the Pacific seaboard Dave Beck has been functioning on the theory that if the C. I. O. is to be stopped in the West, it will be by "beef squads" and suspensions and picket-line penetrations and employer alliances.

The labor struggle in the Far West is a political as well as an economic combat. Under the influence of the C. I. O. the Commonwealth Federations of Washington and Oregon have abandoned the slogan "Productions for Use" in favor of a more moderate economic program, and the emphasis has been shifted to the building of a popular front against fascism. C. I. O. leaders like Bridges and Pritchett want a program which will keep reactionaries out of public office; they frankly admit they would rather take a chance on a mild liberal like Murphy of Michigan than run a Farmer-Labor candidate and risk electing an extreme conservative who would use troops during strikes and labor disputes. In all probability the C. I. O. and A. F. of L. forces will split next year over the gubernatorial candidate in Oregon.

How long the American Federation of Labor can remain an economic and political power in the West without the lumber workers and the maritime unions is a question which will be answered this year. With these groups gone, it will be largely an organization of teamsters, and it will not even be that if Bridges has any success in the daring and hazardous adventure of chartering C. I. O. teamster unions—a project he is said to be contemplating.

Japan's Dilemma

BY ELIOT JANEWAY

I

UNTIL a few months ago it was feared that nothing could stop Japan's military expansion in China, or her economic expansion in the markets of the five continents. But now Japan appears suddenly to have reformed. She has announced her willingness to compromise in China. Perhaps the most concrete sign of her changed attitude is her recent concession in the silver controversy. All last year Japan stubbornly refused to comply with the new Chinese law nationalizing all domestic supplies of silver—this measure in large part enabled China to overcome the financial panic of 1936. But Japan has finally agreed to turn over to the Central Bank of China all of her Chinese silver stocks, which are estimated to amount to 9,000,000 yuan. Moreover, Japan will surrender her silver "on terms similar to those applicable to other foreign banks," an enormous climb-down from customary Japanese demands for privileged treatment from the Chinese government. Japan's retreat is bound to remove an important obstacle to Chinese recovery. Certainly its psychological importance as a blow to Japanese prestige is enormous. Moreover, Japan is actually in need of silver and is importing it steadily. Her compliance with Chinese demands therefore reflects a really changing situation in Asia.

The lull in Japan's offensive against China may be explained by the severe economic crisis which recovery throughout the rest of the world has perversely caused in Japan. Recovery outside has restored raw-material prices to their pre-depression levels, and thereby struck a deadly blow at Japanese prosperity. For the power of Japan's armed forces and the profits of her magnates hinge alike upon her ability to obtain raw materials cheaply. In effect, the rise of raw-material prices has already operated against Japan as a kind of unplanned but international application of sanctions. The sheer expensiveness of the raw materials necessary to her military and economic offensives has punished her more cruelly than the fiasco of formal sanctions did Italy in 1935.

Japan's export victories during the depression years were primarily victories for her cotton, woolen, and rayon textiles. Textile exports have provided her with much of the revenues she has needed to supply her armed forces on the Asiatic mainland and to develop her heavy industries at home. But her textile industry is almost wholly dependent upon imports of raw materials—raw cotton, raw wool, and pulp. The end of the depression in these three commodities has suddenly precipitated a violent textile depression in Japan. In 1926, when raw cotton sold for 17.5 cents a pound, Japanese competition was still a negligible factor in the world textile market. But when cotton sank to its depression low of 5 cents a pound, the manufacturers of New England and Lancashire—who could buy their cotton just as cheaply—were clamoring for relief from "Japanese underselling." Today, with cotton up again to 12 or 14 cents, Japan has

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all she can do to supply her mills. What the recovery in raw-cotton prices has cost Japanese cotton manufacturers is shown by the following figures: in 1931, 143 square yards of cotton cloth were exported in payment for every 100 pounds of imported raw cotton; in 1933, 200 square yards; and in 1936, 235 square yards.

A recent letter to the *Wall Street Journal* reflects the straits of the Japanese industry. The author, a partner in a well-known New York brokerage firm, was on his way to the Far East at the time of the West Coast shipping strike. The strike had of course held up the shipment of cotton to Japan. And according to this experienced witness, Japanese mills had been operating on so small a cotton reserve that the strike all but caused a cotton famine there. Now if the Japanese had been in funds earlier in 1936 they would have filled their warehouses with every available bale of American cotton. Many American manufacturers did precisely this in order to protect themselves against the rising price. But the Japanese have been, and still are, compelled to operate on a hand-to-mouth schedule. And now they must pay the prevailing market price for their cotton. In desperation they have been turning to the inferior but less expensive brand of cotton produced in India; cotton imports from India exceeded those from America in 1936. They have also been sinking vast sums in the promotion of ambitious cotton-cultivation schemes in China and Korea. These attempts to become independent of the world cotton market will admittedly take years; the Korean program will be completed in 1952.

Wool has run parallel to cotton. The 1926 average price of wool at Boston was 46 cents a pound. During the depression, when Japanese exports first became a world factor, wool fell to 14 cents. The March, 1937, price was again 44 cents, or 2 cents less than the 1926 average. With raw wool at this price the Japanese woolen industry has run into trouble. The manufacturers estimated their 1937 needs at 1,000,000 bales of raw wool. But the authorities, fearful of the drain upon Japan's limited foreign exchange, granted them a quota of only 800,000 bales; this was subsequently increased to 840,000 bales. The "manufacturers allege," says the London *Statist*, "that . . . they will now have to curtail their mill operations below those of last year." A decline in production must in turn be followed by a decline in exports. And a decline in exports means a decline in foreign-exchange receipts. But the foreign-exchange situation has already called forth import restrictions. Thus the circle is completed.

Rayon manufacturers have encountered the same problem. Japan must import some 90 per cent of the pulp consumed by her rayon mills. In 1932, when the Japanese rayon offensive was still getting under way, only 102,000 metric tons of pulp were imported. In 1936, when the industry had reached maturity, it imported 331,000 metric tons. But its 1932 pulp bill was only 15.3 million yen, while its 1936 bill came to 67.1 millions. Pulp imports had roughly trebled in volume; their cost had more than quadrupled.

To complete Japan's misfortune, the only raw material which has failed to participate in the general recovery movement is silk—formerly Japan's chief export staple. The 1926 average price was $6.19 a pound. The depression cut the price to $1.10, and to date it has not recovered to $2. Moreover, it is doubtful whether silk will reach $2. Preliminary estimates of the spring cocoon crop point to a 10 per cent increase in output—a familiar depression tragedy. Also, Italy and China are each expected to produce a greater silk crop this year. Japan's silk customers, anticipating an increase in silk supplies and a consequent fall in prices, are understandably displaying no great eagerness to buy at present prices. The continued depression of silk prices is particularly unfortunate for Japan because her greatest silk market is in this country. And with silk sales here yielding her a disappointing return in dollars, her purchases of American goods become increasingly difficult to maintain. Yet maintain them she must, for in addition to cotton she must buy here about 50 per cent of her pulp, 63 per cent of her oil (oil prices are rising too), and large quantities of materials for the manufacture of armaments.

The rise in the price of raw materials—with the lone exception of silk—is therefore the first of the factors which have caused the current Japanese crisis. The second is the failure of Japanese textile exports to participate in the general revival of world trade. In fact, the revival of world trade has actually resulted in a setback for cotton goods, the most important section of Japan's textile industry, exports of which last year declined in volume and in value. In 1937 this decline should grow more marked because of the quotas and restrictions being imposed against Japanese textiles in a number of countries.

Depression conditions were ideally adapted to the needs of the Japanese textile industry. Raw materials were cheap, and there was no need to invest cash in accumulating stocks for future use. Since the future price was bound to be lower than the present, it was profitable to delay each purchase as long as possible. Moreover, the manufacturers in the countries whose markets Japan was invading were unable to stabilize the price of finished goods. Demand was limited, and costs could not be cut beyond a certain limit. The Japanese manufacturers had only to offer goods at still lower prices, and the American or Peruvian manufacturer, as the case might be, shut his mill rather than produce at a loss. The Japanese industry, profiting from cheaper labor, more modern machinery, and lower interest charges, functioned perfectly in a falling market. The recovery has changed all that. Prices have risen so much that Japan's low production costs are no longer decisive. And since the principal textile markets suffer from a shortage, prices are still rising in complete disregard of Japan's now frantic attempts to cling to the markets she has won in recent years. She can do little in the face of the restrictions against her textile exports being imposed at the instigation of competing manufacturers.

The Philippines provide a case in point. Considerable publicity has been given to recent Japanese inroads there. But in January of this year "the volume of orders placed

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in Japan was much reduced as a result of higher prices [Japanese prices rose 30 to 40 per cent] and the inability of Japanese mills to provide prompt delivery." Another illustration is afforded by Australia, Japan's chief source of raw wool. Japan's inroads into Australian textile markets had been sensational, but Japan and Australia have recently engaged in a bitter trade war from which Japan has emerged the loser. During the next eighteen months the volume of Japanese exports of cotton goods to Australia will be 18 per cent less than they were in 1935, and rayon exports will be 23 per cent less. It is true that the new quotas represent a considerable advance over the 1932 figures, but in 1932 Japanese exports had not yet provoked a trade war. Moreover, with raw-wool prices rising and armament bills mounting steadily, Japan cannot be content to see her export quotas reduced below their 1935 value. Her increasing financial difficulties demand, rather, a substantial increase. The Australian agreement is accordingly a grave Japanese defeat.

Brazil is another market of great importance to Japan. During the depression, partly because of Japanese demand, Brazil greatly increased her cotton crop, Japan paying for her purchases of cotton and other Brazilian raw materials with textile exports. Recently, however, Brazilian capitalists, and American capitalists as well, have undertaken to increase the native textile output, and with such efficiency that Japanese goods are now being challenged by Brazilian products not only in Brazil itself but throughout the whole of Latin America. Thus another profitable source of raw materials is disappearing for Japan, who cannot afford to trade one way with any country, however valuable its raw materials.

In Egypt Japan's boom ended earlier. As the result of a 40 per cent tariff imposed by the Egyptian authorities at the end of 1935, Japan's cotton-goods exports to Egypt fell 35 per cent in 1936, and her rayon exports 50 per cent. Egypt is of course a large-scale producer of raw cotton. A final example of the obstacles now rising everywhere before Japanese textile exports is offered by Iraq. For 1936, "in cotton piece goods . . . Japan . . . practically displaced Lancashire. . . . As to rayon, Japanese supplies amounted to . . . $1,500,000 out of a total of $1,925,000." But at the turn of the year Iraq signified her "intention to return to England for her piece-goods imports." A dispatch to the *Manchester Guardian Commercial* explains that "as a result of recent restrictions against Japan by the Iraq government the price of Japanese goods has gone up 50 per cent . . . [and] Japanese firms cannot today effect immediate shipments." This instance is typical.

In the market where she can least afford to lose purchasing power, the United States, Japan has just suffered a staggering defeat. During the depression Japanese cotton-goods sales in this country had grown sensationally. From a mere 2.8 million square yards in 1932, they had leaped to nearly 75 million square yards in 1936. By January 21, 1937, furthermore the Japanese had already contracted to sell here 155 million square yards of cotton goods—double last year's figure; in 1936 Japan sold more than this amount in only three countries. Japan's invasion of our cotton-goods market was, however, summarily stopped as a result of the agreement signed at Osaka on January 21 by representatives of the textile industries of the two countries. While the agreement permits Japan to fill orders up to the 155 million square yards she already has on her books, it reduces her 1938 market in this country by one-third of this—although with the provision that if Japanese sales here do not reach the quota maximum, 1938 shipments may compensate for the difference.

The coincidence of rising import costs and falling export revenues netted Japan a trade deficit of 130,000,000 yen in 1936. On top of this, "the first two weeks of this year alone saw an excess of imports over exports of almost 70,000,000 yen"—more than half the entire 1936 trade deficit. To a certain extent this may be discounted as seasonal; Japan's first-quarter trade deficit is usually greater than her annual trade deficit. This year, however, the first four months have shown a deficit fully 49.9 per cent greater than that for the same period in 1936. This increase cannot be discounted as purely seasonal. It reflects the colossal increase in the demand of Japan's armament industries for imported raw materials and the growing embarrassment of her textile industries, which in large part have been expected to finance the rising costs of imports. Yet today more than ever, with production and Treasury indebtedness mounting hand in hand, Japan needs a favorable trade balance, or at least a greatly reduced trade deficit. For unless Japan can pay for raw-material imports, it is utterly useless for her to build armament and semi-armament factories designed to be run on materials purchased abroad. As a matter of fact, there is reason to believe that Japan expected a period of negligible trade deficits as recently as last year —when, actually, the 1935 trade surplus was turned into a deficit. The *Oriental Economist,* a financial publication of great authority, went so far as to estimate that Japan's 1936 trade deficit would be only 4,000,000 yen instead of the actual 130,000,000 yen, and that 1937 would again produce a surplus.

Finance Minister Yuki recently announced that Japan would begin to finance imports by gold payments. At the end of March, accordingly, 50,000,000 yen in gold was shipped to this country. But Japan's gold reserve is only 540,000,000 yen, and, to quote the London *Financial News,* "Japan, as a country which seems to anticipate war more strongly than any other country, owns hardly anything but this gold as a reserve for such an emergency." Since March imports have risen so rapidly that the Japanese government has had to ship another 177,000,000 yen in gold to this country, although the original gold allotment for export during the entire year was only 130,000,000 yen. The acceleration of gold exports clearly underscores Japan's inability to foot the bill for the armament program demanded by her military.

Clearly, then, the answer to the question, Why have the Japanese military relaxed their demands on China? is to be found largely in the economic crisis into which world recovery has plunged Japan.

[*Part II of this article will appear in an early issue.*]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

A Letter F.D.R. Ought to Write

John Smith, Painted Post, New York

Dear Sir: Your letter of June 10 is one of many hundreds inquiring about my position in regard to certain recent labor happenings. I have chosen to reply to it because you also ask if Arthur Krock of the New York *Times* is justified in saying that my silence on these questions is "a studied policy," and you ask, "a studied policy of what?" I take this opportunity to set you and Mr. Krock right and to tell you and everybody else just where I stand on some recent anxiety-creating developments in the labor situation.

Let me say at once that I am entirely opposed to lawlessness on either side in labor disputes. I hold it criminal for employers to use force to break strikes, to hire professional thugs from those abominations the so-called "strike-breaking agencies," to stir up trouble where there was none. I hold it equally reprehensible and still stupider for labor to use force to achieve greater rewards and better living conditions. I well know that labor often says, "We must meet force with force; we must defend ourselves against the brutalities of employer-owned police by similar tactics." I deny that absolutely. I go farther. I believe that whatever may seem to be the justification for reprisals, every time labor violates the law or seeks to take it into its own hands, it does itself tremendous harm. It alienates supporters, sloughs off friends, and strengthens those employers who resort to corruption and trickery, to brass knuckles, clubs, and tear gas. Both sides become anti-social, hostile to an orderly public life, when they declare that the end justifies the means. Neither side has the right to violate the law. Neither side can assert that two wrongs make a right. Within the framework of the law we can adjust our differences. If the laws favor one side or the other we can alter them promptly, just as we have made many, many new laws and altered many old ones since I became President. But at bottom we must maintain respect for our courts and the civil authority. Without that we are well on the way to the chaos of utter lawlessness.

No one will accuse me, I am sure, of being unfriendly to labor or indifferent to its needs and aims. Under no other Administration has labor made such strides. Never before has collective bargaining been written upon our statute books. Never before has so great an advance been made for labor as that which is embodied in the Wagner Labor Act, the Social Security Act, and other legislation to which I have affixed my name. I have the right, therefore, to criticize labor when in my judgment it deserves it. I do so now. I say that picketing which by force keeps out of factories people who have the right to enter them is not picketing but violent blockading. As such it is entirely beyond the law governing picketing. I am opposed to sitdown strikes because the sitdown is the forcible taking over of other people's property without their consent.

And when labor or capital seeks to prevent the United States mails from being delivered, it is guilty, in my judgment, of a criminal conspiracy. You also ask my opinion of the withholding of mail by the Post Office from blockaded and besieged factories. I regret that this has happened, and I have made it clear to the Post Office Department that because it has lacked courage it has appeared to take sides and that that *must not be.* A department which boasts that neither heat, nor cold, nor rain, nor snow deters it from delivering its mail cannot afford to be frightened off by picket lines. The next time this happens we shall resort to armored trucks and, if need be, United States guards. Neither labor nor capital has the right to suspend the legitimate functions of this government, and neither will be permitted to do so as long as I am in the White House.

Perhaps you will wonder why I have not said these things before. Frankly I had hoped that it would not be necessary for me to speak out. I have recognized the extraordinary character of the present labor crisis. Labor is readjusting itself to new conditions and is naturally aroused when it comes into head-on collision with reactionary employers determined not to yield their hitherto complete economic supremacy. I had hoped that its new leaders would not permit their men to get out of hand and that the men themselves would exercise self-control, be conscious of their responsibility to their leaders, their cause, and the public. But this has not always happened. Indefensible local strikes have been called; pulling the switches which threw a whole valley into darkness was treason to workers everywhere. In no fewer than 195 communities industries were crippled, homes and hospitals deprived of electricity, essential services stopped. I should like to say to the misguided men who thus abused their power, just *after* they had won a remarkable victory over their employers, that that action did an injury to the cause of the workers from one end of the country to the other, everywhere strengthening the forces of reaction; especially as there was no grievance whatever to palliate the act.

When this happened, it was, needless to say, impossible for me to remain silent. I could not lay myself open to the charge of playing politics or of cowardice in order to gain a political advantage.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

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BROUN'S PAGE

Some Sleeping Beauties

LIBERALS, blown-in-the-bottle liberals, are fond of saying that their every action is guided by high principle and that under no circumstance would they ever stoop to mere opportunism. That sounds well and it may be true, but unfortunately it carries its corollary, which is equally veracious. This may be expressed simply in the aphorism, "Once a liberal always a sucker."

I am not talking, of course, of shrewd and spurious politicians who are lightning-change artists in the matter of putting on or taking off the cloak of liberalism and getting back into their tights. I speak of the much more dangerous breed of liberals who know not what they do. Since practical politics is a sordid game, these gentlemen take pride in their impracticality. As a result, liberals are constantly being used to help the purposes of sinister groups. A little befuddlement will make them serviceable to any cause, and befuddling a liberal is far simpler than rolling off a log.

It would be idle to deny that a few of the liberals who leaped into the fight against President Roosevelt's court proposals were utterly sincere. Because of their sincerity and deserved reputation for honesty of purpose they were used as shock troops by the Old Guard. The words of such men carried great weight, and while they were talking the boys in the back room cooked up their plot and may be in a position to put it over.

It must be apparent by now, even to a liberal, that the drive against the Roosevelt plan has become a piece of camouflage behind which reactionary forces are assembling to sweep away every semblance of the New Deal. This fact has not only been admitted but proudly proclaimed by such organs of the Republican Party as the New York *Herald Tribune*. And the proudest boast is that the alliance for reaction is bipartisan. Never have any Democrats received such praise from the opposition as is now being showered on the seven Senators who turned against the platform on which they were elected.

It has been said that the majority report of the Senate Judiciary Committee reads more like an impeachment proceeding than a report. There may well be significance in this. There are a great many Democrats who would be delighted to impeach Franklin D. Roosevelt, if that were possible, and put John Nance Garner in his place. The astute Mr. Krock of the New York *Times* has pointed out the analogy between the present situation and the revolt of the Republican reactionaries in 1920 which led to the nomination of Warren Gamaliel Harding. Plenty of Hardings can be found within the Democratic ranks, and the bourbons of the party would like to have one in the White House by 1941 at the very latest.

The present drive aims not only to stop the entire Roosevelt progressive program but to scrap what has already been accomplished. Real liberals are not in favor of this vast swing to the right. They can say with justice that Mr. Roosevelt's approach to court reform was far from ideal. And yet I have always felt that there was soundness in the gambler's answer in that very ancient wheeze. You may remember he was warned that the wheel on which he was about to risk his dollars was not above reproach, and that he replied, "What the hell! It's the only one in town." Mr. Roosevelt's plan in regard to the Supreme Court may have its faults, but it is the only one available.

A few months ago there was a great deal of talk by some very reactionary people that a clarifying, or even a broadening amendment would be all right with them. Some even went to the length of asserting that they fought the scheme of additional justices chiefly because they desired some more fundamental plan to protect progressive legislation. Many weeks ago I ventured the opinion that no amendment whatsoever would have any chance if the Roosevelt plan were killed. It isn't killed yet, but it would be foolish not to admit that it has been stopped dead in its tracks. And in that situation is it so that the old fervent amendment boys are rushing forward with their plans? You have only to read the newspaper headlines to realize that nobody has peeped about an amendment in months. And if anybody does, no attention will be paid because the tories feel that they have won the fight to preserve the status quo.

Again it is well to remember that even the most ardent foes of the major portion of the President's plan spoke in friendly fashion of some of the minor elements. There was articulate agreement that the lag between the passage of a law and its test before the High Bench provoked much hardship and confusion. The provision for hastening such cases up to the court of last resort met practically no opposition. And yet in its report the majority of the Senate Judiciary Committee has no kind word for any part of the plan. The reason is hardly mysterious. Those who represent the large interests love the law's delays.

Mr. Roosevelt said that one of the difficulties in the path of an amendment was the bottle neck provided by those small states which could by combination defeat the will of a very large majority. His theory has been made good. The Senators from the rotten boroughs make up the band of last-minute converts which has made the reactionary drive possible.

It is difficult to convert a liberal. I merely ask those who have unconsciously aided in a great betrayal to look at the record. Liberalism will never be a useful force in America until the children of light have made up their minds that they must be at least half as smart as the children of darkness. Oswald Garrison Villard please note.

HEYWOOD BROUN

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THE SUPERIOR VIRTUE OF THE OPPRESSED

BY BERTRAND RUSSELL

ONE of the persistent delusions of mankind is that some sections of the human race are morally better or worse than others. This belief has many different forms, none of which has any rational basis. It is natural to think well of ourselves, and thence, if our mental processes are simple, of our sex, our class, our nation, and our age. But among writers, especially moralists, a less direct expression of self-esteem is common. They tend to think ill of their neighbors and acquaintances, and therefore to think well of the sections of mankind to which they themselves do not belong. Lao-Tze admired the "pure men of old," who lived before the advent of Confucian sophistication. Tacitus and Madame de Staël admired the Germans because they had no emperor. Locke thought well of the "intelligent American" because he was not led astray by Cartesian sophistries.

A rather curious form of this admiration for groups to which the admirer does not belong is the belief in the superior virtue of the oppressed: subject nations, the poor, women, and children. The eighteenth century, while conquering America from the Indians, reducing the peasantry to the condition of pauper laborers, and introducing the cruelties of early industrialism, loved to sentimentalize about the "noble savage" and the "simple annals of the poor." Virtue, it was said, was not to be found in courts: but court ladies could *almost* secure it by masquerading as shepherdesses. And as for the male sex:

> Happy the man whose wish and care
> A few paternal acres bound.

Nevertheless, for himself Pope preferred London and his villa at Twickenham.

At the French Revolution the superior virtue of the poor became a party question, and has remained so ever since. To reactionaries they became the "rabble" or the "mob." The rich discovered, with surprise, that some people were so poor as not to own even "a few paternal acres." Liberals, however, still continued to idealize the rural poor, while intellectual Socialists and Communists did the same for the urban proletariat—a fashion to which, since it only became important in the twentieth century, I shall return later.

Nationalism introduced, in the nineteenth century, a substitute for the noble savage—the patriot of an oppressed nation. The Greeks until they had achieved liberation from the Turks, the Hungarians until the *Ausgleich* of 1867, the Italians until 1870, and the Poles until after the war were regarded romantically as gifted poetic races, too idealistic to succeed in this wicked world. The Irish were regarded by the English as possessed of a special charm and mystical insight until 1921, when it was found that the expense of continuing to oppress them would be prohibitive. One by one these various nations rose to independence, and were found to be just like everybody else; but the experience of those already liberated did nothing to destroy the illusion as regards those who were still struggling. English old ladies still sentimentalize about the "wisdom of the East" and American intellectuals about the "earth consciousness" of the Negro.

Women, being the objects of the strongest emotions, have been viewed even more irrationally than the poor or the subject nations. I am thinking not of what poets have to say but of the sober opinions of men who imagine themselves rational. The church had two opposite attitudes: on the one hand, woman was the Temptress, who led monks and others into sin; on the other hand, she was capable of saintliness to an almost greater degree than man. Theologically, the two types were represented by Eve and the Virgin. In the nineteenth century the temptress fell into the background; there were, of course, "bad" women, but Victorian worthies, unlike St. Augustine and his successors, would not admit that such sinners could tempt them, and did not like to acknowledge their existence. A kind of combination of the Madonna and the lady of chivalry was created as the ideal of the ordinary married woman. She was delicate and dainty, she had a bloom which would be rubbed off by contact with the rough world, she had ideals which might be dimmed by contact with wickedness; like the Celts and the Slavs and the noble savage, but to an even greater degree, she enjoyed a spiritual nature, which made her the superior of man but unfitted her for business or politics or the control of her own fortune. This point of view is still not entirely extinct. The other day, in reply to a speech I had made in favor of equal pay for equal work, an English schoolmaster sent me a pamphlet published by a schoolmasters' association, setting forth the opposite opinion, which it supports with curious arguments. It says of woman: "We gladly place her first as a spiritual force; we acknowledge and reverence her as the 'angelic part of humanity'; we give her superiority in all the graces and refinements we are capable of as human beings; we wish her to retain all her winsome womanly ways." "This appeal"—that women should be content with lower rates of pay—"goes forth from us to them," so we are assured, "in no selfish spirit, but out of respect and devotion to our mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters. . . . Our purpose is a sacred one, a real spiritual crusade."

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Fifty or sixty years ago such language would have roused no comment except on the part of a handful of feminists; now, since women have acquired the vote, it has come to seem an anachronism. The belief in their "spiritual" superiority was part and parcel of the determination to keep them inferior economically and politically. When men were worsted in this battle, they had to respect women, and therefore gave up offering them "reverence" as a consolation for inferiority.

A somewhat similiar development has taken place in the adult view of children. Children, like women, were theologically wicked, especially among evangelicals. They were limbs of Satan, they were unregenerate; as Dr. Watts so admirably put it:

> One stroke of His almighty rod
> Can send young sinners quick to Hell.

It was necessary that they should be "saved." At Wesley's school "a general conversion was once effected, . . . one poor boy only excepted, who unfortunately resisted the influence of the Holy Spirit, for which he was severely flogged. . . ." But during the nineteenth century, when parental authority, like that of kings and priests and husbands, felt itself threatened, subtler methods of quelling insubordination came into vogue. Children were "innocent"; like good women they had a "bloom"; they must be protected from knowledge of evil lest their bloom should be lost. Moreover, they had a special kind of wisdom. Wordsworth made this view popular among English-speaking people. He first made it fashionable to credit children with

> High instincts before which our mortal nature
> Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised.

No one in the eighteenth century would have said to his little daughter, unless she were dead:

> Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year
> And worships't at the temple's inner shrine.

But in the nineteenth century this view became quite common; and respectable members of the Episcopal church —or even of the Catholic church—shamelessly ignored Original Sin to dally with the fashionable heresy that

> . . . trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God who is our home:
> Heaven lies about us in our infancy.

This led to the usual development. It began to seem hardly right to spank a creature that was lying in Abraham's bosom, or to use the rod rather than "high instincts" to make it "tremble like a guilty thing surprised." And so parents and schoolmasters found that the pleasures they had derived from inflicting chastisement were being curtailed, and a theory of education grew up which made it necessary to consider the child's welfare, and not only the adult's convenience and sense of power.

The only consolation the adults could allow themselves was the invention of a new child psychology. Children, after being limbs of Satan in traditional theology and mystically illuminated angels in the minds of educational reformers, have reverted to being little devils —not theological demons inspired by the Evil One, but scientific Freudian abominations inspired by the Unconscious. They are, it must be said, far more wicked than they were in the diatribes of the monks; they display, in modern textbooks, an ingenuity and persistence in sinful imaginings to which in the past there was nothing comparable except St. Anthony. Is all this the objective truth at last? Or is it merely an adult imaginative compensation for being no longer allowed to wallop the little pests? Let the Freudians answer, each for the others.

As appears from the various instances that we have considered, the stage in which superior virtue is attributed to the oppressed is transient and unstable. It begins only when the oppressors come to have a bad conscience, and this only happens when their power is no longer secure. The idealizing of the victim is useful for a time: if virtue is the greatest of goods, and if subjection makes people virtuous, it is kind to refuse them power, since it would destroy their virtue. If it is difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven, it is a noble act on his part to keep his wealth and so imperil his eternal bliss for the benefit of his poorer brethren. It was a fine self-sacrifice on the part of men to relieve women of the dirty work of politics. And so on. But sooner or later the oppressed class will argue that its superior virtue is a reason in favor of its having power, and the oppressors will find their own weapons turned against them. When at last power has been equalized, it becomes apparent to everybody that all the talk about superior virtue was nonsense, and that it was quite unnecessary as a basis for the claim to equality.

In regard to the Italians, the Hungarians, women, and children, we have run through the whole cycle. But we are still in the middle of it in the case which is of the most importance at the present time—namely, that of the proletariat. Admiration of the proletariat is very modern. The eighteenth century, when it praised "the poor," thought always of the rural poor. Jefferson's democracy stopped short at the urban mob; he wished America to remain a country of agriculturists. Admiration of the proletariat, like that of dams, power stations, and aeroplanes, is part of the ideology of the machine age. Considered in human terms, it has as little in its favor as belief in Celtic magic, the Slav soul, women's intuition, and children's innocence. If it were indeed the case that bad nourishment, little education, lack of air and sunshine, unhealthy housing conditions, and overwork produce better people than are produced by good nourishment, open air, adequate education and housing, and a reasonable amount of leisure, the whole case for economic reconstruction would collapse, and we could rejoice that such a large percentage of the population enjoys the conditions that make for virtue. But obvious as this argument is, many Socialist and Communist intellectuals consider it *de rigeur* to pretend to find the proletariat more amiable than other people, while professing a desire to abolish the conditions which, according to them, alone produce good human beings. Children were idealized by Wordsworth and un-idealized by Freud. Marx was the Wordsworth of the proletariat; its Freud is still to come.

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BOOKS

Torrents of Spring

WHITE MULE. By William Carlos Williams. New Directions. $2.50.

IT IS a fine thing that Dr. Williams's "White Mule" has at last been brought out in book form. Dr. Williams, though among the most bracing and original talents in American letters, has never received the recognition so frequently accorded to those who denature and conventionalize the new attitudes and techniques launched by people like himself. That he is detached from all efforts at popular appeal goes without saying. Kenneth Burke once said of Williams that he was engaged in "discovering the shortest route between subject and object," but the reader, unfortunately, having become accustomed to the fatigue induced by long detours, has come to regard the short cut as an aberration of literary faddists.

Williams is too hardy a frontiersman of the word to permit himself the idle luxuries of aestheticism. There are too many things to be seen and touched, too many cadences of living speech to be listened to and recorded; and his novel is as busy doing that as his poetry. What happens on the most ordinary level of American living is the theme of this narrative of a man, his wife, and their two children. Like the spokes of a wheel all the episodes in the book radiate from the first chapter, called To Be, which describes the birth of the second child and its first few days in the world. As in a microcosm the author's creative credo is embodied in this chapter, so instinct with natural piety and pure in its virile tenderness, so alive with sensory detail recreated in language that is swift, bare, tonic, and elated by its closeness to the object. Such plain and humble subject matter is characteristic of Williams, who has a passion for the anti-poetic, which he sees as the solvent of the unreal in art. Moreover, it is this very quality which causes his elements to move with such simple grace and which releases in him a sensibility of springtime that in itself becomes the source of a new poetics. In this sense, if a good deal of modernist writing represents a vision of the end of the world, Williams's distinct strength lies, conversely, in calling forth a vision of its beginnings. And this would explain why he has been able to work within the modernist medium without sharing its decadence.

The novel as a whole, however, is not content with the perception of facts and the feeling of them. There are certain problems, obviously, that the aesthetics of neo-primitivism cannot encompass. Continuing in a different vein the intense search for America that marked his prose work "In the American Grain," Williams employs his characters as instruments to register with unwonted sensitiveness the peculiarities of the American scene. Joe Stecher, the foreman of a printshop, is an Alsatian who came to America in early youth, and his wife, Gurlie, is Norwegian. As foreigners, they are acutely aware of the contrast between the old world and the new and singularly perceptive of American qualities. Gurlie is so rife with the natural humors of a wife that she emerges as a veritable goddess of the home, but since it is an American home she is constantly urging her husband to get into the game, beat the other fellow, and make money. Joe's principal motivation, however, is his pride of workmanship; he is the pure artisan, the man who has not yet been alienated from the product of his labor and who thinks of money as the reward of labor and nothing else. Hence he takes a middle position between employer and worker. He is assailed by vexatious questions, such as are the unions merely businesses or do they represent a higher principle of social justice? Yet essentially he regards both sides in the struggle as interfering with the efficiency of production. Ambition stirs him, and despite himself he gradually becomes more and more involved with the employers. As this is only the first book in what promises to be a series, it is premature to predict the eventual resolution of Joe's beliefs.

It is interesting to observe that Williams too, like most American writers, has not escaped the political baptism of our decade. Patently, there is a correspondence between Joe Stecher and himself. Joe's philosophy of workmanship also defines the relation of Williams, a writer who is primarily a craftsman, to the literary trends of recent years. It is not difficult to see how to him the conflict of classes in literature might seem to be interfering, and perhaps gratuitously so, with the clean functioning of the written word. He would naturally be affronted by the automatism with which the phrase springs to the lips of the political fanatic. Hence, not the least of the tasks he has set himself in his work is the discovery of an attitude toward society that will prove compatible with his creative methods as a writer.

PHILIP RAHV

"There Is a World Dimensional"

HART CRANE. THE LIFE OF AN AMERICAN POET. By Philip Horton. W. W. Norton and Company. $3.

IT IS well that a young critic, Philip Horton, and not one of Hart Crane's many literary friends undertook to write his biography, for Crane's life, like Poe's, is a tragic study of frustration. A friend would have written with a predominantly personal bias; Horton, working from letters and documents, presents his materials objectively and impersonally. He treats the poet with reverence but without sentimentality, and he has no ax to grind. This biography is consequently a dignified analysis of a complex and tortured mind.

Crane was an extraordinarily sensitive person affected by every conceivable personal and social force. Neither his middle-class family nor the period into which he was born afforded him security. He believed, nevertheless, that "there is a world dimensional for those untwisted by the love of things irreconcilable." Like Whitman he placed entire faith in an ecstatic and mystic love. But in daily life he was a strange and very difficult person for companionship. He sought complete identity with humanity and with the physical world, but everything in his life tended to isolate him and to increase his defense of extreme individuality and egotism. Finally even his faith in his own powers went, and he committed suicide.

Mr. Horton has been able to obtain from Hart Crane's mother and family all the important letters and records. He has obtained, too, letters from many New York writers who knew Crane well. Those to Gorham Munson, for example, begin while Crane was in his late teens. Waldo Frank, Malcolm Cowley, Allen Tate, Laura Riding, Slater Brown, and others have doubtless contributed to the author's fund of information. Horton has also been given access to papers containing early versions of many of the poems we now know as

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Crane's finest work. Indeed, he dates carefully almost all the poems. Probably many other letters of Crane's will still be found, and many other interpretations will be made of some of the materials at Horton's command. But in general this biography is authoritative. It does Hart Crane justice, and that is saying a great deal.

As a child Crane was subject to strange neurotic attacks. From the age of seven he was completely aware of hysterical struggles between his parents. His own life became the battle ground of two persons entirely mismated. His mother was emotional and far too inclined to throw herself on her son's mercy. His father, the typical American business man, was more than harsh with a son whom he could not make into another business man. The result was that Crane was denied until too late any financial security whatsoever. He was forced in the most important years of his life to beg and to borrow, to seek any kind of work he could get. He wrote copy for advertisements when poems were teeming in his mind. In New York as a boy and later as a young man in his twenties he often knew himself to be dependent on the hospitality of his literary friends. The middle-class morality and standards which he accepted were in complete conflict with his acknowledged sexual abnormality and his inability to earn a living. The society in which he grew up denied his idealistic mysticism. First betrayed by his father, he was later inevitably to feel himself betrayed by friend after friend.

The twenties in America scintillated with literary battles to little purpose. The younger writers either thrived on competition or retreated from it to Europe, where they made a last stand against their own age and its materialism in their "little" magazines. In time they joined the revolutionary school of writing or were left solitary in their ivory towers. Crane disapproved of the exodus to Europe. He did not join literary schools. Influenced most by the Elizabethans and the modern French poets, he took from his reading whatever most stimulated him creatively. He was unspoiled, for he had not gone to college. All was fresh to him—language and its magnificent and subtle expressiveness, the stimulating new designs evident in modern painting and modern music.

Nevertheless, the attempt to conquer his own medium and at the same time to support himself was too difficult a task for him. He came early to rely on drink for stimulus in writing when he was overtired by work or worry. He talked divinely but too much. Even the friends who encouraged his pranks and follies fled from him and left him desolate. He had taken, moreover, the opposite direction from that of the leader in poetry, T. S. Eliot, for he was concerned with building a whole myth for America when most poets were writing of the disintegrations of a culture. His wholly individual point of view and his difficulty in synthesizing his vision with his real scene caused him to be misunderstood. Critics were very harsh, and Crane was sensitive. Finally, believing that he had come to the end of things, he leaped overboard on the return trip from Mexico, where, too late, he had been sent on a Guggenheim fellowship. This was in 1932, during the depression. Hart Crane, returning home without a job, believed himself too much the individualist to accept the current political cure-alls. He was, however, I firmly believe, the one poet of his period who might have found his greatest poetic convictions substantiated, his mystic faith posited, by the Marxian philosophy. In his psychology and in his financial situation he was alien to his own class. Had he lived to know himself the voice of a great movement, he might have become the first poet of revolutionary belief.

Philip Horton's last chapters are devoted to a very level-headed analysis of Crane's poetry. The earlier versions of the poems prove how wrong academic criticism of Crane may be—how wrong, in fact, even so acute a critic as R. P. Blackmur has been. Crane worked with words as an artist does with color and design, moving pieces of poems from one composition to another, shifting phrases for better effect and association. For him poetry was plastic. Horton is right about Crane's method of realizing his own meaning through sound and association of image rather than through idea. Music and words aroused him to ecstasy. He played the phonograph constantly while he composed. Words and phrases came very unclearly at first; then, as they were written down, their significance cleared and mistakes could be corrected. But revision for Crane meant the reexperiencing of the original emotion; he had constantly to throw himself back into the strange mood of a poem's inception. At times he wrote with speed and great intensity. Two comparatively brief intervals saw most of his great poems composed. The weaker sections of "The Bridge" were written when Crane was mentally ill. As for "The Broken Tower," the one masterpiece of the last year of his life, it was thought of at least a year before it took final shape in his mind. I have a letter from Crane dated January, 1931, in which he writes, "Give my greetings to Léonie Adams and tell her that I think her poem 'Bell Tower' makes me long to do something half so perfect as its delicate and yet majestic overtones achieve." I mention this because of disagreement about the date of the poem's composition.

EDA LOU WALTON

Education of a Maverick

A MAVERICK AMERICAN. By Maury Maverick. Covici-Friede. $3.

THIS Maverick American has put his personality into his autobiography with remarkable fidelity. In general it is the personality of a typical American—I had almost said "from the frontier"; but one thing that Maury Maverick will not stand for is to have Texas called the frontier. With that state his people have been identified for a long time. It was his grandfather who, by refusing to brand his cattle, put the family name into current English usage as an adjective. He has in his ancestry everything that the average American of the South likes to boast about, and he tells you about it with his tongue in his cheek. He sees through it, knows that it is bombast and fustian, and yet revels in it.

It is an extraordinary story that he has to tell, and though he tells it with unsparing self-condemnation, the narrative is chock-full of humor, sarcasm, and a characteristic delight in the frank exposure of humbug. The most moving part of the story is the part concerned with his war experiences; this would be wholly touching if it were not full of humor from beginning to end, humor to arouse the envy of a Charles Lever. Never was there a military career more delightfully recorded; never were the stupidities of our army life and the folly of our participation in the World War better shown up than by this erstwhile commander of a machine-gun company. It may not be generally known that when he reached the firing-line, his men, his fellow-officers, and finally he himself were one after the other wounded or killed—and for eighteen years afterward a bullet in his spine made it impossible for him to have one waking moment without pain. When he first went to Washington a Capitol policeman arrested him for drunkenness because he could not walk steadily! Finally, the Mayos sawed off pieces of five vertebrae

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and took out a spinal-cord tumor. The moral for him is characteristic of the man, and here it is: "It is a damned outrage that a poor man can't go to a doctor. Mayo's fee was low. Their work was far more than satisfactory. But why can't every man be operated on when he needs it? Why should people watch their children die? Why should a man in moderate circumstances have to die because he hasn't got the money for an operation and hospital expenses?"

It is also characteristic of him that although he was making $18,000 a year between his salary as a tax-collector and returns from his business, he dropped it all in the middle of the depression to ride the freights with hobos in order to study what was happening to the victims of the great disaster. He found that the men and women, though helpless and broke, were not professional hobos: "They had no views; neither had they resentment. They did not know why they were hungry and unemployed, and they did not seem to care. They did not even discuss solving their problems. . . ." Of course he went to work to make the lot of these people, at least when they came into his town, bearable. He founded a freight-car colony, only to find that it didn't work as soon as these pitiful people got money. Every time that he touches human nature he learns from it, and that is one of the engaging things about the man and about the book. You feel that because he does go out and meet human nature halfway he is growing all the time. If his book is a delightful jumble, it is because he has found life a jumble, and he has recorded it as he has lived it and seen it.

It was an impudent undertaking, this writing of his autobiography by a man who is just at the outset of his career. It smacks somewhat of the Chauncey Depew who presented his own monument to his birthplace and then made the dedicatory address at the unveiling. Yet I have to admit that the autobiography is absolutely warranted. In his first term Maverick made himself one of the foremost figures in Congress; in his second he has had what he considers the high honor of introducing in the House the President's own Supreme Court reform bill. If San Antonio knows what it is about, it will send Maury Maverick to Congress as long as he can stand up, and then send him in a hammock or on a litter.

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Cafe Philosophy

INVERTEBRATE SPAIN. By José Ortega y Gasset. Translated by Mildred Adams. W. W. Norton and Company. $2.75.

THE general content of Ortega's "Invertebrate Spain" dates back to the 20's and therefore has only an indirect bearing on the present military rebellion in Spain, for which it supplies landscape and background. As regards the background one must point out that, for all of impressions to the contrary, Ortega is not a thinker. His thought structures, large or small, consist mainly in finding a verbal name for the thing, and then explaining the thing in terms of the logical implications of the name. Such thinking can pass as thought only in circles in which rationalist and scholastic methods remain as yet untouched by the historical method and the methods of science proper.

This comment applies to Ortega's study of Spanish "particularism" in this volume. Why is it that in Spain regional differences are so sharp and, when they come into action, so bitter? Why also are horizontal scissions and schisms equally clean-cut and impassable? Why is a general a general and not

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- ***What are the unusual advantages of "coitus reservatus"—and how practised?***
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a Spaniard, a priest a priest and not a Spaniard, an Anarchist an Anarchist and not even a Catalonian? To answer that they are suffering from "particularism" is like saying that water is not as dry as we might like it to be because it is suffering from wetness. As a matter of fact, history and the social sciences have much to say on the phenomena that Ortega describes as "particularism." "Particularism" is not a new phenomenon, nor even a locally Spanish phenomenon. Its laws are on the whole fairly well understood. Do not go to Ortega, however, for that sort of discussion. From the thing he takes us to the name and then from the name back to the thing, and that is the end of it.

The thing, nevertheless, is interesting, and one should read in this connection Ortega's essay on the Spanish military class, which he describes as "a loaded rifle with no one to shoot it." It is to be hoped that Ortega will some day give us equally illuminating essays on the priests, the capitalists, the nobility, the urban workers, the farmers—each class, besides, with its vertical and horizontal divisions. For looking at Spain at long range I have always been interested to note that in Spain we used to have the lower clergy unionized against the hierarchy, and in the army, junior officers unionized against the generals, the monarchy, and the republic.

Ortega's landscape is exceedingly interesting, and along with it the sidelights that he throws on the temperaments of the inhabitants of the different regions—especially the Castiles, the Asturias, the Basque country, and Andalusia. The essay on Andalusia is inimitable: "Let us not exaggerate the indolence of Andalusians. . . . They must do all that is necessary, for Andalusia continues to exist. Their laziness does not completely exclude work. Rather it becomes the meaning of work and the air which work takes on." That is Ortega at his best, and it is such a high grade of best that one wishes he would not waste so much time on his cafe philosophy and sociology.

ARTHUR LIVINGSTON

Sweet Beulah Land

KENNEBEC: CRADLE OF AMERICANS. By Robert P. Tristram Coffin. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

IN A headlong, rapturous mood Mr. Coffin inaugurates the first of a series of books written under the general editorship of Constance Lindsay Skinner. He recasts the history of the Kennebec from the time Hakluyt and Purchas described the first Abenaki Indian down to the day when the last shad net was hung up in the deserted houses on the shore, and does it in a spirit of high romance that would do credit to any scop, gleeman, or jongleur, past or present. Plainly the rhythms of Maine's finest river have cradled him from childhood, and now the whole state's rocks and rills, fir and furniture, fish and people are presented like an all-star Griffith production with technical advice from Swinburne.

Mr. Coffin's enthusiasms are happily contagious and his style is eminently readable. If launched a month sooner this book might well have been responsible for a seasonal deflowering of other sections of New England. For the Kennebec strawberry that comes in the sweet of the year would most surely have been sought out by summer flannels, and the fresh-water clams and fish, under the hot ardors of his pen, become delicacies that would have made company for dinner in every Maine fisherman's home.

Even the actual history of the river is all pretty much

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Sweet Beulah Land to Mr. Coffin. I thought at first it was something for the children, and the policemen who didn't like the WPA play about the beavers. And then I found myself liking it as well as any historical fairy story I had ever read. The Indian queen with whom Aaron Burr fell in love seemed much comelier than Pocahontas, and the craggy men of Maine somehow had a much more direct way of polishing off the French and Indians than had, say, General Harrison. (Incidently the shoe industry and Powers Hapgood are not mentioned.)

Almost everything else and everyone who ever walked the Kennebec are mentioned. Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe is described as she left the First Parish Congregational Church at Brunswick to hurry home and write "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Longfellow, Hawthorne, Abbott, Millay, and Robinson are other names the Kennebec can claim. And the rapids of the Cobbosseecontee saw, besides English colonials, Moravian Germans, Irish, Huguenot French, French Canadians, Poles, Finns, Swedes.

I am delighted that I have had more than one summer on the Kennebec; otherwise I should feel with the hairy ape that I didn't quite "belong." But perhaps when Mr. Havighurst writes of the upper Mississippi and Mr. Burt of the Snake River, there will be a similar wish to have been cradled where cradling was best, as Mr. Coffin suggests with major accents.

Reading his story of the Kennebec is actually like looking at one of Maine's own patchwork quilts, where the brightest colors stand out the clearest. For although Mr. Coffin at the end of the book briefly deplores the fact that his river has been befouled by greed and that it must continue to take summer boarders until its three great nourishers of life—fisheries, forests, and merchant marine—are reopened to activity, he never examines the reason behind the reason or suggests, as a historical writer, any possible solution to the Kennebec's stagnation. He hopes for the day when alewives can fill Merrymeeting Bay again, but in the meantime he is romantically certain that his salt-of-the-earth Yankees will continue to fill the cradles with the best Americans.

STANLEY YOUNG

King into Office Boy

THE MAGIC OF MONARCHY. By Kingsley Martin. Alfred A. Knopf. $1.25.

FOR many years historians and students of government will debate the issues surrounding the abdication of Edward VIII and the accession of George VI. In these discussions they will make frequent references to Kingsley Martin's contemporary account of events and of the course of British opinion. Sympathizing in many respects with Edward and frequently critical of the Cabinet, Mr. Martin nevertheless does not take the view stated on the floor of the House of Commons by James Maxton—who is not the least picturesque member of the Labor opposition: "Mr. Baldwin and the National government have demonstrated in a most effective fashion that the greatest and best-loved monarch this nation has ever known can be scrapped like an office boy and that within twenty-four hours another office boy can be started in his place."

In Mr. Martin's interesting little book—much of which has been published in the *New Statesman,* which he edits, and in the *Political Quarterly,* which he helps to edit—two principal points are explicitly dealt with. There are also oblique

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references to what might have happened but did not, and underlying the whole discussion is a fourth consideration which in the future may be of far greater importance than the other three.

Mr. Martin begins with an analysis of the mystical aura which for some years had been surrounding the monarchy. For the occupant of the throne the people had come to have something approaching reverence. Adoration was so extreme as to be irrational. Even before the accession of Edward VIII the press had ceased to devote any serious attention to the functions of the Crown. That showed a marked change from the attitude toward monarchy during the reign of Victoria. *Punch* made ribald jokes about her first pregnancy. The newspapers talked plainly about the Prince Consort and freely expressed what they conceived to be the truth concerning the abilities and the characters of other members of the royal family. Until some years after Victoria's death there was nothing resembling reverence.

The change came about partly because the monarchy had behaved itself for so many years and partly because, in Gladstone's phrase, there had been a gradual and beneficial substitution of influence for power. That transformation spelled the defeat of the republican movement. At the time that influence is exerted, however, no one outside the government or the court circle can know just how great royal pressures and resistances are. This is Mr. Martin's second point. Queen Victoria's correspondence, recently published, shows that she was by no means the figurehead Walter Bagehot declared her to be. On this an incisive and still authoritative analyst of the British constitution was in error. But on the psychological importance of monarchy Bagehot made shrewd observations when he argued the importance of the theatrical functions of government. He was more prophetic than he knew, since he could not anticipate the zenith reached in the recent Coronation. For that he would have had to be a Barnum, not simply an economist, or "a wit and a seer," as Woodrow Wilson called Bagehot.

The consideration which is hinted at rather than fully discussed by Mr. Martin belongs in the realm of what Sir Henry Maine called "hypothetics"—"the science of that which might have happened but did not." If the discussion of Edward VIII's romance had not been taboo in the British press, if talk of it had not been limited to Mayfair groups, what would the popular attitude have been? The magic of monarchy encouraged a conspiracy of silence until the Bishop of Bradford, whose family name appropriately is Blunt, made his statement—apparently without reference to Mrs. Simpson—that the King was failing to appreciate the value of God's grace. If the news had not been broken so bluntly, would the Baldwin government have had to attempt to bring the dominions into line for a morganatic marriage? After the event it is easy for Englishmen to answer such a question with a decided no. But what would have been the attitude of the British government if the crisis had come weeks later, when visitors from the dominions were already en route to the Coronation; when any change of plan would have been devastatingly "bad for trade"? The historian will at least say that the King did not think of a time table that might have permitted him to keep his throne and still have the woman he loved.

The underlying issue which may become acute in the future is one that was discussed by the Labor Party before George V died. Members of the Labor Party, like Sir Stafford Cripps, suggested that if Labor had a clear majority in the House of Commons and sought to drive legislation to the statute books,

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there would be determined opposition from the Crown. Such opposition might be decisive if the King refused to pack the House of Lords. Under such circumstances what would be Labor's strategy? The precedent of Ulster's resistance to Home Rule in 1913 was declared to be ominous. The King's share in the fall of the Labor government in 1931 and the formation of a National government, while incompletely known, held out no assurances to the Labor Party.

Edward VIII was more of a "constitutional king" than any of his predecessors had been. He agreed with the Baldwin government that in a matter which intimately affected his private life but was of great public concern he must bow to the will of his ministers supported by the House of Commons. Will the present or a future king similarly yield if he learns from Labor ministers that they, backed by a majority of the House of Commons, insist that in a matter of public importance which outrages his private opinions—say, the nationalization of industry—he must bow to their will? In the case of Edward VIII the Labor Party supported Mr. Baldwin. In the second case will the Conservative Party support a Labor government? Perhaps the Labor Party should have asked for such an assurance before it joined in sacking the office boy.

LINDSAY ROGERS

Modern Government

CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS. By Carl Joachim Friedrich. Harper and Brothers. $3.50.

EVEN political scientists have become isolationists today, separating their interests into water-tight compartments from which no leak is allowed. Books are concerned with the American Constitution or with the governments of fascist or of communist countries, and there is little attempt to discover any common threads of pattern in the web of government as a whole. Much less is there any effort to trace the reasons why so many of the threads appear short, broken, and unrelated. To this neglected field of comparative government Professor Friedrich has brought a welcome and important contribution. He believes that modern political science is not concerned with either existing or ideal forms of government but rather with instruments of political action in terms of the objectives that government is supposed to serve. Therefore his emphasis is on the working of political institutions and procedures and what he calls "common-sense" notions concerning them.

The first part of his book is devoted to modern government in the making. The microscope is first focused on the major objectives of government today and the means by which they are achieved. Beginning with a consideration of the forms of government and the methods of political action, Professor Friedrich soon deserts the beaten path and comes to grips with his subject in his illuminating discussion of the bureaucracy—using the term in no invidious sense—as the core of modern government. In the second part of the book he is concerned with what is somewhat cumbrously called "constitutionalizing modern government." Starting with the common hypothesis that a constitution means primarily the process by which the action of government is or may be effectively restrained, he canvasses the various means for such restraint with clarity and insight. His far-reaching scholarship is apparent particularly in the chapters on federalism and the territorial division of powers. The discussion of the Constitution as a political force and of political parties is thinner at the edges and makes one wish that Professor Friedrich had kept his spotlight on them until the picture emerged more clearly.

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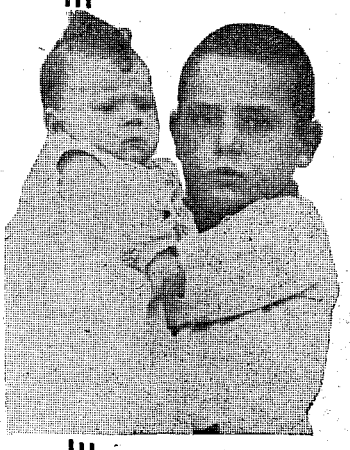

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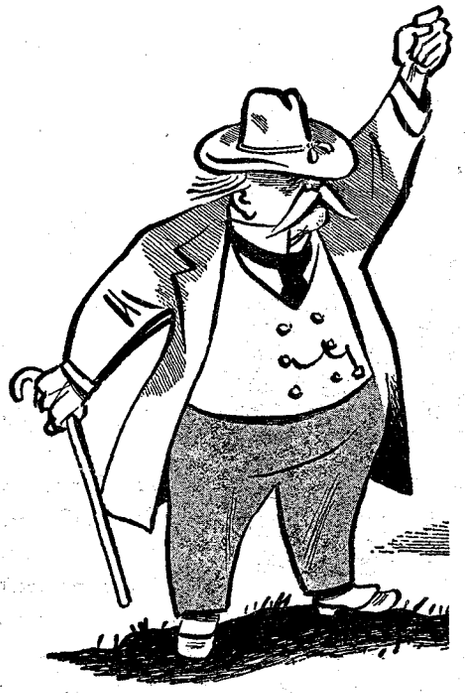

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The chief difficulty of the volume is the lack of clarity with which its audience is envisaged. It is written, the author says, for those who are puzzled about the future of constitutional government and democracy. But these embrace a great and various multitude, and he seems to aim first at one and then at another in the throng. For persons with considerable technical knowledge, many of his discussions do not go beyond those of a college classroom, as, for example, the paragraphs on administrative law and administrative action. Technicians will also miss a developed theory of the state today. On the other hand, the novice will find some of the material hard going—for instance, the excellent theoretical treatment of responsibility and its enforcement.

Professor Friedrich has great belief in scholarship expressed in the vernacular, but at times he finds it impossible to develop some of the philosophical ideas which are his concern without resort to the language of the study and the lamp. The resultant mixture is at times a curious hybrid. Nevertheless, the attempt to develop the ideas of the scholar in language intelligible to the uninitiated is a laudable one. Professor Friedrich also despises the idea of a bibliography, which he thinks might well be "washed out," but his own important and exhaustive bibliography will not be despised by those who desire to venture farther along the path where he has so brilliantly led.

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Letters to the Editors

The American Writers' Congress

Dear Sirs: To Mr. Macdonald the American Writers' Congress seems to have been (1) a maneuver of the Communist Party; (2) like the pep talks which precede the Exeter-Andover football game; (3) innocuous and boring; (4) an unintelligent effort to build up a united front of writers against fascism.

There were 358 delegates to this congress, and the only persons who thought of the congress unfavorably were Mr. Macdonald and four others who sat assiduously with him at all the sessions, and one Trotskyite who did not sit with the Macdonald group. Mr. Macdonald suggests there would have been others had they not been excluded, and that these others would have revealed to the delegates the machinations whereby they were strung on a "Stalinist" line.

Excluded? Was Mr. Macdonald excluded? Or those who sat with him? Or the other Trotskyite? The call to the congress was widely published, and in it all writers of standing were invited to sign the call and secure their credentials. Why did not the writers whom Mr. Macdonald says were excluded apply? James T. Farrell, who, Mr. Macdonald says, "didn't think it worth attending," belatedly turned up in a tropical sun helmet just before the great public meeting began, but was unable to buy a ticket as hundreds, unfortunately, were being turned away.

There is something very pathetic, and something very serious, in the attitude formulated in Mr. Macdonald's letter. It is pathetic that a man as intelligent as Mr. Macdonald is, and as honest as I once knew him to be, can see nothing in that really remarkable meeting at Carnegie Hall—where Archibald MacLeish, Donald Ogden Stewart, Earl Browder, Walter Duranty, Muriel Draper, and Ernest Hemingway spoke to an audience that overflowed the topmost seat. It is pathetic that he can see nothing in the whole congress but a "Stalinist" plot. It is serious when those with whom Mr. Macdonald has become temporarily associated attack the congress in the reactionary *Saturday Review of Literature* and elsewhere, and are praised editorially therefor in Hearst's New York *American*. By varied and circuitous routes the enemies of mankind enter the Valley of San Simeon.

The proceedings of the congress will soon be published in book form. Readers of *The Nation*, and the public, will then be able to decide for themselves whether the papers were as innocuous and dull as Mr. MacDonald implies.

Mr. Macdonald seems to think that questions about "the freedom with which the critic who is sympathetic to the building of socialism should comment on Soviet art and letters," or "the relationship of the writer to political parties," or "the attitude of writers who accept the people's front in politics toward revolutionary literature—must they shift their allegiance to liberal-democratic literature?" or "why left-wing literature has not come to more impressive fruition" were not answered. They were answered —by Newton Arvin, B. A. Botkin, Malcolm Cowley, Martha Gelhorn, Albert Rhys Williams, Granville Hicks, Eugene Holmes, and myself, as well as by the speakers on Friday night at Carnegie Hall. The answers apparently were not what Mr. Macdonald wanted to hear, and he was psychically deaf to them. I sincerely hope he will not be psychically blind when the book about the congress comes out next fall.

The second American Writers' Congress has made possible a national organization of writers in which the regional writers' groups (three—the Pacific Coast, the Midwest, and the Southwest—have already had congresses of their own) will be integrated and important parts. The possibilities of a national League of American Writers for enabling writers to obtain an insight into the relationships between day-to-day events and the main stream of world trends are tremendous and of prime importance in the defeat of fascism. In another year, or two at the most, the new League of American Writers should be well on the way to exerting a creative influence upon American letters, and its rising tide will probably inundate the palsied inconsequence of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. For the first time in this country there will be a cultural organization, with its roots in the masses, that will actually have meaning and power.

To Mr. Macdonald this may seem only "a Communist maneuver." To those of us who are working to bring it about, it is neither a maneuver nor Communist. It is a direct effort to encourage and enable the writer to take his rightful place at the van of life. The phrase "Communist maneuver" is meaningless. It is as politically wrong as Mr. Macdonald's statement that the Socialist Party is opposed to the people's front. Is it in Spain? Or in France? No, it is not. Mr. Macdonald shouting "Communist maneuver" at the Writers' Congress is like William Green shouting "Communist" at John L. Lewis.

HENRY HART

New York, June 14

"A Cardinal of the Medici"

Dear Sirs: I am not sure that the case against Mrs. Hicks Beach's "A Cardinal of the Medici" is as strong as Mr. Weaver makes out in his review in *The Nation* of May 29. It seems unjust to blame her because her publisher has advertised her as "the wife of the brother of a lord." And the fact that she has devoted years to mastering the intricacies of a historic background does not necessarily imply that that she is deficient as a writer of fiction.

I believe that some of the points Mr. Weaver scores against the book are points in its favor. A vulgar formula of historical fiction is to smuggle one or two fictional characters, usually lovers, into the company of the historically illustrious and to involve some exalted historical character in the solution of their problem. Mrs. Beach has chosen for her fiction element a woman plausibly and significantly related to history. As the mother of the illegitimate hero she would have been forced to play an obscure part in the events of the time. Her activities would necessarily be limited to the realms of thought and feeling. In short, she is the perfect observer according to Henry James.

In complaining that the story should have been told from the point of view of the hero, Mr. Weaver disregards a theory of fiction indorsed by some very eminent practitioners. Dramatically there are considerable advantages in viewing the hero from the outside and working out his motives by impassioned inference. Mrs. Beach's point of view seems to me admirably chosen.

In comparison with most other fiction and popular biography with the back-

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ground of the Italian sixteenth century, Mrs. Beach's book is remarkable in its order and restraint. To have presented so crowded and turbulent a period in terms more subtle than those of melodrama is almost a unique achievement.

The temper of Mr. Weaver's review is revealed in his rather picayune objection to Mrs. Beach's transference of a phrase of Keats to the sixteenth century. Surely Keats transferred many sixteenth-century phrases to the nineteenth. And Shakespeare's Cleopatra wore stays. ROBERTS TAPLEY

New York, June 9

A Policeman's Lot

Dear Sirs: While in the office of a high police official some time ago, I noticed a copy of *The Nation* on a table. "Why, lieutenant," I said to the officer, "what are you doing with such seditious literature around?" The lieutenant blushed and stammered, "Oh, we have to keep track of what these enemies of the people are doing!" SAMUEL BEER

New York, June 10

The Third Degree

Dear Sirs: Whenever major crimes come into the day's front-page headlines, as in the Gedeon, MacKnight, and Tiernan murders, it seems clear to the reader that the technique of the police in obtaining information is fundamentally unsound. In these recent cases, and in various others described in the 1937 press, the suspect has very convincingly declared that what he said to the police was false, drawn from him under circumstances amounting to torture.

If mental and physical barbarities were successful in obtaining the truth from criminals, the public might perhaps be willing to condone them. But according to news accounts, the modified forms of torture so widely practiced in this country under the mild title of the third degree are proved over and over again to be just as ineffectual at getting at the truth as were the quainter wheels and spikes of our ancestors.

The public is tempted to wonder whether the breach between the psychologists, lie-detector inventors, and social workers on the one hand, and the practicing arm of the law on the other is not in itself one of our time's major defects. We are not surprised when policemen who have learned about criminals through night-stick contact sincerely believe in the efficacy of mental and physical torture. But we are disappointed when scientists who have in their hands more efficient methods of obtaining results by humane means neglect to apply their knowledge here and now, even if this requires emerging from their ivory towers. WILLIAM D. ALLEN

New York, May 27

Wall Street Won't *Heil*

Dear Sirs: I am a conservative myself, and I think I know a pretty representative cross-section of Wall Street capitalists. But reports of what business men are thinking that appear in *The Nation* have frequently no relation whatever to my experience.

In the article on *Time, Fortune, Life,* in the May 22 issue, Dwight Macdonald says: "The business classes are becoming aware that something beyond old-style capitalism is necessary. This means, if they have anything to say, some form of fascism." My worry is how Mr. Macdonald can discover something in the minds of the business classes that I cannot. I feel quite sure that business men are becoming aware that unless they return to old-style capitalism, they are lost. Hitler had a certain popularity in the dingiest corners of Wall Street a year or so ago, but his sympathizers now are negligible.

I feel particularly sensitive about Mr. Macdonald's observations, as I have just returned from Vassar where I assured a palpitating class in economics that fascism had lost almost all its appeal for Wall Street. T. H. GAMMACK

New York, June 15

Latin American Dilemma

Dear Sirs: In regard to Señor G. Arbaiza's article, Latin America: Boycott Fascism, in *The Nation* of June 5, I should like to make a few brief comments. (1) The reason for Latin America's silence in the Spanish war is not so much suppression as impossibility of action. The few people who would do something in behalf of the Spanish government—writers, workers, teachers, students—are too poor or have too little influence to help. (2) Spanish American dictators have not borrowed Nazi methods. We claim the dubious honor of being the forerunners of fascism. Mussolini and Hitler are disciples of Dr. Francia, Solane Lopéz, Rosas, Porfirio Diaz, Benavides. (3) How can Latin Americans boycott en masse the trade and traders of Germany and Italy when all bankers, importers, brokers, and buyers are also fascists? (4) Great sums of money are needed to counter the influence of thousands of fascists and Nazi agents throughout Latin America.

I agree with most of Señor Arbaiza's opinions but it is impossible to begin an effective boycott without a complete house-cleaning. A. TORRES RIOSECO

Berkeley, Cal., June 11.

CONTRIBUTORS

THOMAS L. STOKES is Washington correspondent and feature writer for the Scripps-Howard papers.

ALEXANDER WERTH is Paris correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian.* His recent book, "Which Way France?" has been acknowledged as the outstanding work on French politics of the last decade.

RICHARD L. NEUBERGER is a Seattle journalist who has frequently contributed articles on affairs in the Northwest to the New York *Times, The Nation,* and other periodicals.

ELIOT JANEWAY writes the monthly "Trade Currents" on the Far East for *Asia.*

BERTRAND RUSSELL, who fits into no one category, is among other things a philosopher, mathematician, social theorist, and an English earl. The latest of his many varied works is "The Amberley Papers," a history of his family.

PHILIP RAHV is an editor of the *Partisan Review,* a radical literary journal.

EDA LOU WALTON, poet and critic, is associate professor of English at Washington Square College, New York University.

ARTHUR LIVINGSTON, translator of Pareto and the plays of Pirandello, is associate professor of romance languages at Columbia University.

LINDSAY ROGERS, authority on international law, editor of the Knopf series of Political Science Classics, coauthor with H. L. McBain of "The New Constitutions of Europe," is professor of public law at Columbia.

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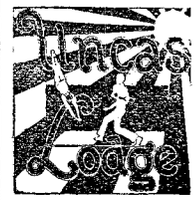

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